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# Music and Letters

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Volume XXV

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## SOME ENGLISH AFFINITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS OF HAYDN'S SONGS

BY MARION M. SCOTT

"Why is it that Haydn, who presumably knew little or nothing about English music, does write in what seems a distinctly English idiom when he sets English words? The Canzonets are not very Haydnish, to begin with (or am I wrong?) and if I heard, for instance, 'My mother bids me' without knowing it, I should say offhand it was a song by Bishop—half a century later; but that only makes it the more curious. Can there be anything in the influence of language on composers?"

THE question, put to me by the Editor of 'Music & Letters', proved the starting-point for an investigation that was fascinating. It took me right into a parterre of Haydn's art little remembered to-day—a parterre as fresh as new-trimmed grass and summer clove pinks—upon which the famous men and beautiful women who were his friends seemed to move, their images bright in the mellow light of history. If I have reached no final verdict on the influence of language, I have at least visited a charming scene, have brought back facts, some new, most of them unfamiliar, and have assembled them here for the first time.

Haydn was forty-nine before he took to song-writing, and songs form but a small part of his output. Hitherto his professional life had been occupied with the big things of church, opera, orchestral and chamber music. He was, by nature and habit, instrumental-minded. Then, at an age when in most men the lyric impetus lessens, he suddenly turned his attention to the German *Lied*. His earliest songs were formal, antique in style, fundamentally instrumental in conception. A contemporary critic called them unworthy of the great Haydn. As years passed his songs grew younger, freer, more spontaneous, more imaginative, until he anticipated Schubert. Why this change? Partly, I think, because Haydn always studied to advance in his art, but in greater measure because his visits to England affected him profoundly.

Musical history must often be interpreted in terms of relativity; the *Lied*, in our sense of the form, had barely begun in Haydn's day. Taken on their own merits his songs are delightful, and it need not trouble us that they are more admirable as music than as songs. As the eighteenth-century rhymist said of Scotland:

If you'd seen these roads before they were made,  
You'd lift up your hands and bless General Wade.

Much is in the point of view. Haydn's 'Creation' is not unvocal. Yet over one hundred years ago, in the heyday of Italian singers, Madame Mara, soprano soloist in the second English performance, complained



loudly that "the voices only accompany the instruments", and Dr. Crotch, Professor of Music in the University of Oxford, croaked that "Whatever style Haydn adopts, instrumental effects form its chief excellence". Strangely enough, Mara and Crotch, wrong in particular, were right in general. Haydn did regard the voice as an instrument, not as an imperatrix (save in his operas), and his songs were primarily for drawing-room use. In the first instance they were for himself, I think. He loved to sing them and said "in critischen Häusern, durch die Gegenwart und den wahren Ausdruck muss der Meister sein Recht behaupten".

Haydn's employer, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, was probably the earliest auditor of a collection of 'XII Lieder' published by Artaria of Vienna in 1781. A letter from Haydn to the publisher gives a Figaro-like glimpse into the princely household. Haydn writes that the songs are to be called 'Sammlung Teutscher Lieder für das Clavier gewidmet aus besonderer Hochachtung der Mademoiselle Clair von Herrn Joseph Haydn Fürst Esterházy'schen Capellmeistern' and adds:

Unter uns gesagt, diese Mademoiselle ist die Göttin meines Fürsten. Sie werden wohl einsehen, was dergleichen Dinge für Eindruck machen! Wollten sie also diese Punkte eingehen, würde ich nicht ermangeln die noch abgängigen nach und nach zu verfertigen. Diese Lieder müssen aber erst am Elisabeth Tag zum Vorschein kommen, nemlich an den [sic] Namenstag dieser Schönen.

Now Haydn had as appreciative an eye for a pretty woman as anyone, but he clearly had a poor opinion of this beauty. Something must have happened to bring the prince to the same view, for when the songs came out they were dedicated, not to her, but "Aus besonderer Hochachtung und Freundschaft der Freulen Francisca Liebe Edle v. Kreutznern".

A second set of XII songs to German words followed exactly two years later, December 1783. From Artaria's catalogue of Haydn publications it looks as if this "II<sup>te</sup> Theil" bore no dedication. But the copy of the songs in the British Museum carries a beautifully engraved title-page, setting forth the same dedication to the "Freulen Francisca Liebe Edle v. Kreutznern".

Both sets have the same peculiarity in that Haydn openly calls them "songs for the piano": the voice shares the treble of the piano part and occupies the same stave. They are at one remove, as it were, from Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words' and are very pleasant to play as such.

It is time now to consider what Haydn, alongside his German songs in the 1780s, may have known of English music. At first sight one would say "nothing"; on investigation one wavers. British travellers to Vienna were frequent. Dr. Burney, on his celebrated tour in 1772, only missed seeing Haydn at Vienna because the latter was in the country. Mrs. Thrale (now Mrs. Piozzi) and her husband included Vienna in the itinerary of a tour. The young Duke of York ("model of manly beauty"), arrived in 1784; a galaxy of young British noblemen, headed by Lord Barnard, later Duke of Cleveland, made that gay city gayer in the winter of 1786-7. "Walking Stewart" turned up in the course of a stroll from Calais to Constantinople. But the British musicians in Vienna during the 1780s were the crux of the affair so far as Haydn was concerned. Nancy Storace the singer (the original Susanna in Mozart's 'Figaro'), her brother Stephen Storace the composer, two of whose operas were performed in Vienna in 1785 and 1786, Thomas Attwood, the pupil of Mozart and future organist of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and the mercurial Michael Kelly (who created the parts of Basilio and Don Curzio in the first performance of Mozart's 'Nozze di Figaro') were all



of the circle in which Haydn moved—Kelly even had the luck to stay with Haydn at Eisenstadt for four days and to be driven around that “terrestrial paradise” by his host in a carriage belonging to Prince Esterházy lent for the purpose. During those days it is unlikely Kelly allowed his music to rest under a bushel. Kelly, who had the nerve to show his own compositions to Mozart! Whether he confined himself to foreign songs in Haydn’s presence we can only guess, but we know for certain one famous English song was in Kelly’s repertory—the wistful, clinging melody called “Water parted from the sea” in Arne’s ‘Artaxerxes’, for he had sung it to the British Ambassador at Naples, Sir William Hamilton, in 1779. (But for us the song is for ever associated with the dying Keats and his poignant application of the words to himself.)

Finally among English visitors to Vienna came Bland the music publisher in 1789, intent on carrying Haydn off to England. Though Bland’s project failed then, Johann Peter Salomon succeeded two years later, and Bland’s was the first roof beneath which Haydn slept when he arrived in London.

With all this coming and going, besides an increasing correspondence between Haydn and the London publishers, it seems only natural that breaths of English music reached him. One English poem, Wither’s ‘Shall I wasting in despair’, certainly did, in a German version, for he set it as one of the XII German songs of 1781.

But what is odd is the curious mix-up between Hook’s song, ‘The lass of Richmond Hill’ and the final adagio of Haydn’s string Quartet in C, Op. 54 No. 2, the theme of which Haydn later borrowed from himself for the great chorus “The Heavens are telling” in ‘The Creation’. This similarity was noted long ago by old Samuel Wesley who referred to it as a “whimsical fact”.

Now did Hook originally borrow from Haydn or Haydn from Hook, or was it a case of simultaneous and separate invention? Leonard McNally, author of the poem, was a barrister practising at the Irish bar and wrote ‘The lass of Richmond Hill’ for the lady of Richmond, Yorkshire, whom he married in 1787. That places the poem in 1787 or earlier. The musical setting by James Hook was first sung in public by Incledon, a favourite singer, at Vauxhall Gardens in 1789. It was published in Walker’s ‘Hibernian Magazine’, Dublin, December, 1789, and other editions followed as the song’s popularity grew. By the end of the century Dussek even introduced it into one of his sonatas.

Haydn’s C major Quartet, in Op. 54, was one of a set composed prior to September 1788, and published by Artaria in 1789. Longman & Broderip of London also published it and added to the title-page the note “Performed at the Professional Concert, Hanover Square, 1789”. This set of quartets is said to have been a great favourite, which looks as if Hook might have heard the one in C before he composed his song; if so, then his typically English tune may be just as much a reflection of Haydn as was Horn’s song, ‘I’ve been roaming’ a reflection, years later, of the finale of Haydn’s Symphony in D, No. 96!

Another song-association with the quartets of Op. 54 is worth noting, though it is not strictly relevant. Haydn’s biographer, Pohl, remarked that “the theme of the romantic elegiac *Largo cantabile* in Op. 54 No. 3 recalls the beginning of Zumsteeg’s ballad ‘Die Büssende’”. Thanks to Dr. Paul Hirsch, I have secured the date of Zumsteeg’s ballad—1796—as given in the books by Landshoff and Friedländer. Chronology points to Zumsteeg as the borrower. Yet, but for chronology, how easy it would be to think Haydn had amused himself in this particular set of quartets by quoting themes from other men—Haydn, who dryly took a theme by

Martini when setting the words, "Thou shalt not steal" in the Ten Commandments. Even now, if anyone were to come along and find a remarkable likeness between the *Allegretto* of Op. 54 No. 1 and some folk tune, I should feel no surprise!

After surveying what Haydn may have known of the British in Vienna, it is methodical to see what England knew of Haydn in the corresponding period. His music had been admired there from 1765 onwards. By the 1780s competition was brisk among publishers for works bearing his name. When he first entered English view as a song writer is not clear, but I imagine it must have been when Longman & Broderip brought out a charming oblong folio, covered in marbled paper, containing 'Twelve Ballads, composed by the celebrated Haydn of Vienna, adapted to English words with an accompaniment for the Harpsichord or Piano Forte by Will<sup>d</sup>. Shield'. These songs were no other than the 'XII Lieder' of 1781, now with English words to fit them—skim-milk poetry of the poorest! Yet there is one poem, 'The Tear', which in its title perhaps comes nearer Haydn's inner thought than the original one of 'Der erste Kuss'. For the opening notes of this song have a strange affinity with the opening of that remarkable clavier Sonata in C minor Haydn had composed in 1771—possibly the very sonata that came to him in his great illness—and whose opening notes appear again as the melody of Brahms's terribly poignant song, 'Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer'. (Brahms understood his Haydn from the heart outwards.)

The 'Twelve Ballads' were successful to the point of producing a 'Second Set of Twelve Ballads by Haydn adapted by Dr. Arnold', published by Preston, London. These were not, as might be supposed, a re-issue of the 'XII Lieder' of 1783, but a collection of verses set to airs culled from other works by Haydn, the excerpts from the 1783 volume forming a mere nucleus round which the manufactured songs were grouped.<sup>1</sup> A queer proceeding! and the queerer because by one of those Alice-in-Wonderland-like strokes with which students of Haydn are often confronted this *Second Set of Twelve Ballads* is assigned in the British Museum catalogue to a year earlier than the first—to 1787 in fact! Another quaint publication followed in 1789—more 'Twelve Ballads', the music this time from miscellaneous composers. Ballad VIII (very un-English) is said to be by Haydn with words by Charlotte Smith from 'The Sorrows of Werter'. Whatever the origin, it can hardly have been a song in its inception, and the words were trash. Such sentiments as

Oh! SOLITUDE, to thy sequester'd vale,  
I come to hide my sorrow and my tears

were diametrically opposed to Haydn's own; and when, in 1791, he landed in England, he began the happiest period of his life. Famous, fêted, in full tide of his finest creative work, his English visits were a triumph both for the man and artist. No solitude for him!

At that time folksongs—then called national songs—were much the vogue. Shield, himself the composer of songs remembered to this day, nevertheless thought it expedient to drive home a lesson in composition with a Russian air because, he said, "young ladies are sometimes partial to national melodies". When William Napier, a Scottish publisher settled in London, fell into business difficulties in 1792, he turned to folksongs and to Haydn for assistance. Neither failed him. Haydn arranged a hundred Scots songs with accompaniment for pianoforte, violin and violoncello, the collection forming the second volume in a series of which the first had appeared in 1790 under the title 'A Selection of Original

<sup>1</sup> The song "Wüsst ich dass du mich lieb" from the 'XII Lieder' of 1783 appeared in this 'Second Set of Twelve Ballads' to words by Dr. Johnson.

Scots Songs in three parts; the 'harmony by eminent masters'. It met with instant success. Dedicated to the Duchess of York, with six other members of the royal family and close on four hundred lesser notabilities and commoners as subscribers, it met with instant success, re-established Napier and brought Haydn bread upon the waters in the shape of £50 from the rescued man.

Judged by our standards the settings were an anachronism, but taken without reference to anything but their own eighteenth-century surroundings they are genuinely pleasant and sound well in performance. Haydn could be trusted for that; he always considered how a thing sounded, and he had bestowed care on his arrangements. Now there is no way of getting music more thoroughly into one's bones than by writing it out. These "WILD but EXPRESSIVE Melodies", as Napier called them, were probably one of the most powerful agents in the "Englishing" of Haydn's style, Irish though it seem to say so, for not all were Scottish. Only an expert could sort their sources, but a mere musician may feel such songs as 'Barbara Allen', 'Green grow the Rashes' and 'John, come kiss me now' are not wholly the property of Scotland, and others might be picked from the table of contents. That list is entertaining. Alongside real folk titles one finds such a pseudo-classical monstrosity as 'Ye Gods! was Strephon's picture blest' and even an enigma solvable by the law of association. It reads 'To Danton me' and is meaningless until one turns up the song and remembers the date, for the word in the song is "daunton" and the year was 1792. Well might the printer's mind have been running subconsciously on the news from France!

The frontispiece to this volume is an allegorical picture by W. Hamilton, R.A., finely engraved by F. Bartolozzi. Hamilton was a well-known artist, who had been sent to Rome as a boy by Robert Adam, the famous architect, to study under Zucchi, but returned to complete his education at the Royal Academy of Arts. Bartolozzi was the celebrated engraver. Thus a triumvirate of talent met to assist Napier. Haydn already knew Bartolozzi well, for B. had engraved his portrait in 1791, Haydn had been a guest at the marriage of Bartolozzi's son in St. James's, Piccadilly, signing the register as a witness, and Haydn had composed a 'Grand Sonata for Pianoforte' expressly for Mrs. Bartolozzi. If he knew the engraver, surely he came to know the painter? I have often wondered whether Hamilton, R.A., could have been the Mr. Hamilton of "Rodney Place, Clepton Hill near Bristol" whose name and address Haydn pencilled in his notebook for 1794 when he made a round of visits in the West and South. Alas! I have found no link, and Sir Walter Lamb, Secretary to the Royal Academy of Arts, has courteously told me that their records give only London addresses for W. Hamilton, R.A. But whoever was Haydn's host at Bristol, I am quite sure it cannot have been the one that J. E. Engl, editor of Haydn's diary in 1909, says it was! Engl was "Sekretär und Archivar" of the Mozarteum at Salzburg, but his easy assignment of Sir William Hamilton, Ambassador to the Court of Naples, to the role at Bristol is altogether amateurish. Had he looked up Sir William's whereabouts during the summer of 1794 he would have found him precisely where he ought to be—at Naples. The paths of Haydn, Sir William and Lady Hamilton did not cross till six years later.

1794 was the year in which Napier, encouraged by the resounding success of Volume II, brought out a third 'Selection of Original Scots Songs in Three Parts, The Harmony by Dr. Haydn'. Some of them were yet more typically English than their predecessors. What tunes, for instance, could be more tied up with English tradition than 'The



Shepherd's Son' and 'Green Sleeves'? Anyhow, there they were, for Haydn to absorb their colour.

From the first weeks of his first stay in London Haydn had been hearing English music. He heard it at the London Pleasure Gardens, which were then homes of song; he went to the theatre, where we know he heard Shield's music for 'The Woodman' and 'Hamlet'; he went to Westminster Abbey, where he heard English choral singing; he went to St. Paul's, where the Charity Children, singing John Jones's chant, moved him more than any music in his life. He mixed on friendly terms with such thorough-going English composers as Arnold, Shield, Attwood, Webbe and Cooke. He met with some of Arne's music. Most significant of all, he got to know Purcell's glorious art. In his diary Haydn notes that on June 1st 1792 two of his own symphonies were played at Madame Mara's benefit concert, adding, "I accompanied all alone on the Piano-forte a very difficult English Arie by Purcell". The "Arie" was 'From Rosy Bowers'. It is quite probable Haydn may have been introduced to other Purcell songs by Shield—a strong Purcellian—and it is even possible he may have seen a copy of 'King Arthur', for the opera had been republished as recently as 1789, possibly for a revival of the work. Thus many English melodies sank into Haydn's mind, with great goodwill on his part, for he liked England, he liked the English, and he was always wishful to please his patrons so long as he could do it without lowering his own high standards of craftsmanship. The Canzonets, the most English things he ever wrote, are the proof of this.

Canzonets or "little short songs" had been domesticated in England for a couple of hundred years. How Haydn's two sets originated we do not know, except that they grew out of his friendship with the Hunters. These were no other than the celebrated surgeon and his wife: John Hunter, strong, open-faced, large-featured, with blue-grey eyes beneath prominent eyebrows; Anne Hunter, handsome, accomplished, a consummate hostess. During 1791-2 Haydn must often have dined with them at their house in Jermyn Street and maybe visited them at their country home in Earl's Court, Brompton, where Hunter kept a perfect menagerie of animals to study, including an eagle and two leopards. In 1793 Hunter died suddenly. Haydn, on his return to England, in 1794, seems to have picked up the links with Mrs. Hunter, and in that very year 'Dr. Haydn's VI Original Canzonettas for the voice with an accompaniment for the Piano-Forte, Dedicated to Mrs. John Hunter' were "Printed for the author and sold by him at No. 1 Bury Street, St. James". A copy lies beside me as I write, autographed by Haydn in ink brown with age. All the first issue was signed by him: he hoped this time to make money for himself, just as on his previous visit he had raised funds for Napier. Perhaps also Mrs. Hunter, the author of all the poems set, desired to assist him. It has sometimes occurred to me that the whole idea of Haydn's Canzonets may have sprung from her having written a poem to an *Andante* in a sonata by Pleyel, Haydn's former pupil. The poem was the one beginning "Tis sad to think the days are gone, When those we love were near". Haydn, who could be biting about second-rate work, probably decided he could set the poem better. Further, he improved the text by transposing the order of the verses, and the resultant song is the one which, above all others, became most popular. Whether it was indeed the starting-point for the Canzonettas is undiscoverable. Its position as third of the set tells nothing. Named by Haydn and Mrs. Hunter 'A Pastoral Song', it is now universally called 'My Mother bids me bind my hair' and is a simple engaging air in A major 6-8 time, a

key and measure which I think appealed to Haydn as suitable for rustic subjects. While not exclusively English in type, it is noticeable that it catches the smooth undulating character of Anne Hunter's lines in its melody.

The Canzonet which stands first in the set is, however, astoundingly English. Despite the voice and treble being tethered together and word-setting being occasionally sacrificed to the melodic flow, the general effect of 'The Mermaid's Song' is charmingly lithe and light. The key is C major—did Haydn intend a punning allusion?—and in it the Mermaid disports herself as if in her element.

Come with me and we will go,  
Where the Rocks of Coral grow,  
Follow, follow, follow me.

she sings, and in her refrain there rings something more intensely English even than the folk melodies, for it is the very accent of Purcell's fairy music. In just such terms did the 1st and 2nd Fairies tease the Drunken Poet in 'The Fairy Queen'; and the opposing Spirits of Grimbald and Philadell conduct their duel of enticement in 'King Arthur'. "Hurry, hurry, hurry", sings the Grimbald team, to be answered by Philadell's spirits with "Hither this way, this way bend". Did Haydn know these passages? It is hard to suppose he did not.

Canzonetta 2 is just good eighteenth-century stuff both in words and music. The verses may have sprung from Mrs. Hunter's sense of her own grief; Haydn set them with due sensibility, but to-day 'Recollection' is a period piece.

'Despair', the fourth Canzonetta, is despairing indeed as to its words and begins at utmost stretch with

The anguish of my bursting heart,  
Till now my tongue hath ne'er betrayed,

to end with the anticlimax

And if sad thought my fate recall,  
A sigh may rise unheard by me.

By nature Haydn was a stranger to melancholy, and his setting is in a bright key, E major, with rather more chromatic effects than usual, but his prolongations of the short lines of the poem into weeping-willow-like phrases are clever.

Canzonetta 5 originally appeared without any title. In all later English editions it is called 'Pleasing Pain'. Haydn took considerable care to suit his melody to the sense of the words, and the patterning has more plasticity than some of the other Canzonets, but the general impression left by the music is of an English air arranged in the Italian manner.

'Fidelity', Canzonetta 6, is one of Haydn's finest songs. Passion and tragic power pulsate in it. His choice of F minor shows at once what he meant, for he reserved minor keys for special occasions, and F minor in particular for music of a strong and sorrowful character. The song's musical affinity is not with England this time, however, but with Beethoven. Some years ago Dr. Harvey Grace drew attention in 'The Musical Times' to passages in 'Fidelity' which bear a remarkable resemblance to the second subject of Beethoven's piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 2 No. 1, first in the set of three dedicated to Haydn. "Was this a coincidence or a compliment to the dedicatee", wrote Dr. Grace. The matter is extraordinarily interesting, for the whole of the Exposition of the first movement in Beethoven's Sonata has such affinities of feeling and rhythm with 'Fidelity' that I wonder whether Beethoven did not deliberately take the song as the inner impetus for his Sonata. Some

thematic links also exist between it and Mozart's great G minor Symphony.

There remains, of course, a bare possibility that Haydn, not Beethoven, was the debtor. Haydn had met the young Beethoven at Bonn in 1790; B. came to him as a pupil at Vienna towards the end of 1792, and even stayed with him at Eisenstadt on a long visit during the early summer of 1793. Haydn could hardly have failed to hear Beethoven extemporize. Had Beethoven already begun to compose his F minor Sonata that year? There is no conclusive evidence, but the Sonatas of Op. 2 were completed at least eight months before they were published, and when, as Thayer says, Haydn reached Vienna on August 20th 1795 upon his return from his second visit to England, Beethoven had the three Sonatas ready and played them to Haydn, to whom they were dedicated, at one of Prince Lichnowsky's Friday morning concerts.

The first set of Canzonets achieved a big success: a second set was a natural corollary. It came in 1795, and Mrs. Hunter is believed again to have been responsible for the selection of poems. Here, as before, a sea-song was chosen for the opening number, but this time it was no mermaid but a jolly Jack-Tar whom Haydn and Anne Hunter portrayed. Mrs. Hunter, like a true Briton, knew somewhat of the sea. She began

High on the giddy bending mast  
The seaman furls the rending sail

and worked up to sentiments proper and popular for a maritime nation in

The roaring Cannon loudly speaks  
'Tis Britain's Glory we maintain.

Haydn, on the other hand, knew no more than three crossings of the Channel and a short visit to Portsmouth might teach him. His brisk music has not the sea-tang that keeps Dibdin's songs alive, and it is poles apart from such a splendid folk-tune as 'On board a Ninety-eight'. In short, Haydn's "Sailor" seems remarkably like Mozart's Papageno disguised in Navy serge, with a flash from 'Figaro' on his shoulder.

'The Wanderer', in G minor, though without the splendour of Schubert's great song bearing the same name, is nevertheless rather fine in the impression it gives of loneliness, regret, night and the supernatural. Its defects lie in the conventionality of the harmonic and melodic details. When published later with German words it became attached to the Napoleonic legend by a new title, 'Buonaparte, oder der Wanderer in Ägypten'.

The text of 'Sympathy', the next Canzonet, is after Metastasio—Haydn's old friend—and, at two removes, after Sir Philip Sidney. Haydn set it as a deep-breathing, forward-carrying *Andante* with a distinctly English idiom. The whole thing is really rather charming.

For Canzonet 4 the planners flew high: they chose their words from Shakespeare. Not, mark you, one of his lyrics, which would have been the obvious thing, but pickings from a famous blank-verse passage in 'Twelfth Night', which they reduced to

She never told her Love,  
But let concealment, like a worm i' the Bud  
Feed on her Damask cheek:  
She sat like Patience on a Monument,  
Smiling at grief.

Haydn put this into the damask key of A $\flat$  major, and then proceeded to expand the abbreviated words by his expressive piano part. One would like to praise this song, but alas! it is the classic example of bad word-setting—the accents are utterly irresponsible. Only the general feeling of the music fits the general situation.



Canzonet 5 appeared under the title 'Why asks my fair one', which soon became 'Piercing eyes' and remains so. It is as charming an English tune as could be culled anywhere from our folksongs or eighteenth-century ditties—but it happens to be by Haydn.

'Contentment', sixth in this set and twelfth and last of what one may call the canonical Canzonettas,<sup>2</sup> does not yield many clear-cut impressions, save that it would be at home as one of the quieter passages in a Sullivan opera. Perhaps Haydn was getting a little tired of Canzonettas by now.

Yet two songs which foreign musicologists think belong to his English years, though published much later, have a spontaneity and beauty that lift them right out of the rut. One is the lovely 'O tuneful voice', the words of which are said to have been written by Anne Hunter on Haydn's departure from England, and may well have enshrined her recollections of his singing. Haydn treated them rather as an address to Music's self, an eloquent offering to his beloved art. At moments the Muse of Schubert-to-be seems whispering into his ear. That modulation, for example, into D $\flat$  major, so far from the tonic key yet so entirely right! Or at the outset that first entry of the voice, woven into the cadence of the introductory passage for the piano; it enchants me anew at each hearing. Haydn had employed the device before in 'She never told her love'. He uses it better here. But his best use of it is in 'The Spirit's Song', the second of these "extra" Canzonets. Maybe no one values it nowadays, for I have never heard it sung, but to me it appears a little masterpiece of musical imagination. Even its key, F minor, is significant, and like all Haydn's English songs it opens with a long passage for the piano in which (as throughout the four verses) the accompaniment paints the scene and carries on the action with an initiative worthy of Schubert. Haydn makes us feel from the outset something mysterious, something supernatural is happening: when the voice emerges with the words "Hark, Hark! What I tell to thee" we realize the Spirit has risen from its tomb and, unseen itself, is watching the mourner. Haydn conveys a strange sense of its non-materiality by his use of a bare octave passage rising in slow semitones at the lines

My Spirit wanders free  
And waits till thine shall come.

Following this there is an interlude for the piano with a kind of sobbing (or ought I to say throbbing?) melismatic passage in the treble which fades into ordinary accompaniment when the voice re-enters with a contrasting melodic section—for the song is in simple aria form—and then by a stroke of genius is heard again in the bass during the last bars of the song when the voice has ceased and the piano, by its music, expresses the sinking back of the spirit into silence and night.

The song is usually supposed to belong to Haydn's second English sojourn and is even referred to as being one of the Canzonets. From the nature of the music itself I should be disposed to place its composition three or four years later, during the period when Haydn was at work on his finest quartets—those of Op. 76 and Op. 77.

A song which undoubtedly belongs to the English years is one Haydn wrote in reply to the musical offering made him by Dr. Harrington of Bath. It was an occasional piece answering an occasional piece. Judged by the catalogue of his works Harrington had a passion for composing

<sup>2</sup> Un canonically there appeared a 'Third Set, Dr. Haydn's Six Italian and English Canzonettas selected from his Grand Overtures by permission of Mr. Salomon (Voice, Piano or Harp), by D. Corri', published in London by Corri Dussek. Reckoning by the history of that firm the date of publication must have been between 1795 and 1802, as Corri Dussek & Co. got into financial difficulties in 1801 and Dussek (the well-known composer and son-in-law of Corri) is said to have fled to the Continent to escape his creditors. The firm then became simply D. Corri. Very possibly Corri, and Dussek, a personal friend of Haydn's, had hoped to retrieve their fortunes, as Napier had done before, by the prestige of Haydn's name.

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must compose a song! The poem for 'Lines on the Battle of the Nile' was produced by a young gentlewoman travelling with her—Mrs. Cornelia Knight—and a fulsome effusion it was, of considerable length and more than common futility. Haydn set it as a solo cantata for soprano and piano. Battle and fury were not his *forte*. However, craftsmanship came to his aid. By adroit use of conventional fanfares and semiquaver passages he indicated the commencement of the fight, and skilfully took refuge in silence on the piano when the voice related the blowing up of *L'Orient*. Following the catastrophe the wiggling tremolandos that express the shaking Earth, Air and Sea, and the arpeggio chords depicting the dispersal of the débris, are exquisitely funny. The word-setting, at the peroration, is funniest of all—quite his worst English ever!

Blest Lea—der—, blest Lea—der—, foreMOST in re-nown  
of all whom res—CUED climes a-dore.

A mediocre song, yet almost aggravatingly efficient and effective for its purpose in spite of the fact it was composed in such a hurry that the autograph copy (which belongs to the Esterházy family) is partly in Haydn's handwriting, partly in that of his copyist Elssler and partly in that of his pupil Polzelli.

To celebrate the Haydn bicentenary in 1932 'Lines from the Battle of the Nile' was brought out by Ludwig Landshoff in 1931 (Edition Adler) as never having been printed before. This was a mistake, and even Professor Larsen fell into it in his magisterial book 'Die Haydn-Überlieferung'. Actually the song was printed over a century earlier in London by Clementi, Banger, Hyde, Collard & Davis (late Longman & Broderip), the name of the firm indicating a date between 1802-3 and 1810. The British Museum, however, where I discovered the song, places it about 1800: at least, the Catalogue does.

Viewed dispassionately, 'The Battle of the Nile' is a hybrid song, more Italian in style than anything else. English it is not. Yet it is the proverbial exception that proves the rule. Had the poem possessed the true ring of English lyric poetry Haydn would have caught it. His ear for music was supremely fine; he always judged things by how they sounded and applied the test to his own works. To English words his tongue might be intractable, but to the longer cadences of the English phrase, to their rhythmic progressions in poetry, above all to their living expression in the music of English composers, his apprehension was instant and sensitive. What he heard he absorbed. Not the grammarians but the poets and musicians of England gave Haydn his English idiom.



## ROMAIN ROLLAND (1866—1943<sup>1</sup>)

By JOHN W. KLEIN

"THE TOLSTOY OF FRANCE", that is how Maxim Gorki termed Rolland, and surely it was a just tribute to one of the most disinterested and courageous figures of our age. Rolland always retained his sanity and humanity even in the most difficult circumstances. It was amazing how universally respected he was. "There is scarcely a man in the world whom I respect more than I do you", H. G. Wells once wrote to him. But what impressed Wells most about Rolland was his unswerving devotion to the doctrine of human kindness.

Human kindness—that was the keynote of Rolland's work. To help men to understand one another, to destroy the prejudices of hatred, ignorance and intolerance that separate them—this was the aim of his life. And, in spite of growing difficulties, Rolland did meet with a magnificent response. No modern French author has enjoyed such world-wide fame, or has excelled in so many fields of creation: as a novelist, as a dramatist, as a mystic, as an essayist, as a music critic and musicologist. His versatility was equalled only by his international renown. No novel of our century has been translated into more languages than 'Jean-Christophe'; even a relatively slight work such as his early life of Beethoven remains one of the two or three best-known and most widely read of musical biographies. In America (and, to a lesser extent, in England also) he was undeniably the most respected of modern French writers; in Russia, in recent years, his popularity almost equalled that of Gorki; in Germany, in pre-Nazi days, he was triumphantly fêted and even extravagantly praised; in France, his own country, which, for political reasons, viewed him rather sourly, he was regarded not only as a brilliant writer of fiction, but also as one of the foremost musicologists of his age. Indeed, though his work was singularly unequal and he had frequent lapses into mere journalism, he was a most remarkable novelist, perhaps the only worthy successor of Tolstoy; he was a most erudite and imaginative music critic, in some respects the most original and eloquent that France has ever produced; he was also an ambitious and most enterprising playwright, who was one of the rare dramatists to respect history and who wrote a cycle of plays on the French Revolution which are unsurpassable for insight, atmosphere and objectivity.

But, like his master Tolstoy, he could not confine himself exclusively to art. "Art and action are inseparable", was his favourite phrase. Some mysterious power incessantly urged him into the political arena, and even his friends sometimes looked askance at him and deprecated his vehement outbursts. His own countrymen (though legitimately proud of him) never quite forgave him for his humanitarian attitude during the last war. It was easy for men without insight or tolerance to misinterpret his generous words; his ideal of universal brotherhood was frequently misrepresented and derided. He suffered—in silence, but he suffered bitterly. Once when—sensing this hidden wound—I expressed regret that despite the admiration of the *élite* he was not yet sufficiently appreciated in France, he answered with a slight touch of irony tinged with sadness: "Ah, perhaps I ought to have been born in Russia; there I might have been better understood." And, indeed, in the last years of

<sup>1</sup> R. Rolland died in Paris on October 10th 1943.

his life he displayed an ever-growing interest in Russia, an interest reflected in his novels and political essays. In Russia itself he was acclaimed as a great thinker. Many of his theories on a people's theatre have been put into practice; his 'Le 14 Juillet' served as a model for the majority of modern Russian revolutionary plays.

He became a fanatical opponent of Fascism. The hero of his last great novel, 'The Soul Enchanted', is brutally murdered by the Fascists at Florence. As for Germany, he had striven to understand her; he had, in his own words, "laboured all his life to bring together the minds of our two nations"—and yet what emerged was the barbarous Nazi state, the development of which filled him with horror and dismay. The desertion of his hosts of German admirers was a particularly bitter disappointment to him. "The Germans do not know the meaning of moderation", he once remarked to me, "they pass suddenly from the most extreme and undignified pacificism to the most rabid nationalism. They have no spiritual equilibrium." Indeed, the Germans proved the truth of Rolland's assertion by extravagantly proclaiming him the greatest French novelist of all time and the only French writer who had ever understood Germany, and then, when he was seventy-seven years old, interning him in a concentration camp!

Music was always the chief passion of Rolland's life, as well as his first source of inspiration. He used to repeat the words of Nietzsche: "Without music life is but a torture and an exile." His finest novel, 'Jean-Christophe' (the first great musical novel) is, indeed, born out of the very spirit of music; in its very construction it reminds one somehow of a symphony. As Rolland's biographer Stefan Zweig says: "Only a musician can realize how in this work the most comprehensive type of musical composition is transposed into the world of speech". It is the history of a musician of genius, in some respects a curious mixture of Beethoven, Wagner and Hugo Wolf, though one should not exaggerate the obvious points of resemblance. Jean-Christophe is more than one particular composer; he reminds us at various moments of many great musicians. This figure is, indeed, depicted with amazing power, skill and intensity; here is without doubt the most convincing and realistic portrait of a great musician in the whole range of fiction. Christophe is neither an eccentric nor a degenerate, but an intensely vital and exuberant figure; like Beethoven, he is energy and resolution personified, one who dares to be himself and to proclaim it openly, one whose irritability and harsh bluntness conceal a noble and generous soul. The book is of course not merely one for musicians; there is no futile display of mere technical learning, which would have been out of place in a novel; but there is a remarkable insight into the mentality of an independent and ruggedly, uncompromisingly sincere musician, as well as a real grasp of the problems that confront him.

The German classics (starting with Bach and ending with Schumann and not even sparing Beethoven) are ruthlessly satirized in 'Jean-Christophe'. Wagner is denounced as the originator of the most monstrous of all operatic conventions. Brahms is unjustifiably swept aside as an essentially mediocre musician lacking vitality and exuberance. But perhaps the most bitter scorn is reserved for what Christophe considered the essentially effeminate and unheroic art of Debussy and his followers. Yet, one is tempted to ask, is Christophe always Rolland's mouthpiece? Not always, perhaps, but fairly frequently. Christophe's criticisms of Bach and Beethoven are no doubt youthful aberrations, but his contempt for Brahms and his distaste for Debussy reflect his creator's own opinions. Brahms was always Rolland's blind spot: he simply

could not judge him impartially or objectively. Yet he always honestly strove to be a cool and unprejudiced critic.

However, it is no exaggeration to assert that Rolland was one of the pioneers of modern musical criticism. He believed that a music critic should have a wide general culture as well as genuine psychological insight. He should not separate the artist from his work or from his time, but judge him from the point of view of the thinker and even of the moralist as well as from that of the musical specialist. Criticism which confined itself almost exclusively to technicalities was his *bête noire*. "Music itself is something more than a question of technique", he would say irritably. He believed that it should not be considered merely as an abstract art, for it had an undoubted relationship with literature, with the theatre and with the life of an epoch. "The history of music", he observes, "is closely connected with that of other arts". It was the business of the critic to trace these connections and to show how one art may influence the other, how music was often the first indication of tendencies that later on translated themselves into words and even into deeds. Great artists anticipated the moods of the world; Wagner's grandiose, aggressive and arrogant art was the harbinger of German imperialism. It was, moreover, no mere coincidence that German music began to degenerate after the Franco-Prussian war and that French music revived. The disasters of the war regenerated the French musical spirit. Thus music was influenced not only by cultural conditions, but also by political movements and historical events that could liberate or stifle it.

Rolland, however, never confined himself merely to theory. He was essentially a man of action. In 1900 he organized the first international congress for the history of music in Paris. In 1901 he founded with J. Combarieu 'La Revue d'Histoire et Critique musicales'. In 1903 he organized the musical section of the École des Hautes Études Sociales, of which he was the first president, and where, as later on at the Sorbonne, he lectured to enthusiastic audiences on the history of music. His almost unique combination of scholarship, psychological insight and passionate enthusiasm rendered his lectures incomparably fascinating.

All these great qualities are to be found in Rolland's striking thesis on 'Les Origines du théâtre lyrique moderne', which was the first thesis on a musical subject to be accepted by the Sorbonne, and which he himself regarded as by far his most important contribution to musicology. This work contains the most original and illuminating views on the history and evolution of opera in the seventeenth century, a subject that had until then been almost entirely neglected and scorned. Rolland was perhaps inclined to concentrate a trifle too exclusively on Italy, but that was surely understandable. It should be remembered that he was one of the very first to draw attention to the great significance of Monteverdi, who, in his opinion, created the first genuine musical theatre for the people. Henry Prunières declared that

it is Romain Rolland who, without embarking upon a technical study of the work of Monteverdi, has given us the profoundest judgments of it. With an intuition bordering upon genius, he has entered into Monteverdi's very soul and defined synthetically the essential characteristics of his art.

Rolland attributed the growing interest in Monteverdi largely to his own exertions, and was extremely—and certainly legitimately—proud of this achievement. He was also the first to do justice to Francesco Provenzale (Scarlatti's teacher), a neglected composer whom he greatly admired for his daring originality and dramatic intensity. Rolland always loved to draw attention to what he considered to be neglected



genius ; his championship of the almost forgotten Ludovic Vitet, the brilliant and singularly penetrating dramatist of the religious wars in France, is worth mentioning. But in both cases Rolland has been a voice crying in the wilderness.

It would be difficult to over-rate the importance of this historic thesis. It not only combines erudition and charm in a rare degree, but it has opened up new fields and exercised a considerable influence on the development of musicological studies. Prunières (who paid an eloquent tribute to Rolland's genius) affirmed that he was profoundly influenced by it, and that it induced him to devote ten years of his life to the study of Monteverdi, Lully, Cavalli and Luigi Rossi, with, as we know, the most brilliant results.

English readers may, however, be occasionally disconcerted by some of Rolland's strictures. He disposes of the English lyrical drama rather too summarily and denounces that little masterpiece of comic art, 'The Beggar's Opera', as "a collection of coarse and trivial songs that interrupt the action in the most inept fashion". Rolland's weak point was always his lack of humour (he was remarkably similar to Galsworthy in this respect, as well as in many others) and his failure to appreciate 'The Beggar's Opera' is significant and characteristic. However, it is not true that he had no interest whatever in English music. He wrote a scholarly article on 'English Opera in the Seventeenth Century' for the 'Encyclopédie de la Musique'. He had a profound admiration for Purcell, whom he considered potentially a greater musician than Handel, and almost the equal of Mozart, but without the latter's "joviality and robustness". He believed that Purcell's music possessed a certain juvenile spontaneity that was irresistible. He naturally regarded 'Dido and Aeneas' as the most moving and pathetic of English operas, and declared that Dido's farewell was alone sufficient to immortalize the work. But, in his opinion, 'King Arthur' was Purcell's dramatic masterpiece : there were things in it that were full of martial vigour. Handel himself could not have written anything more heroic than the invocation to St. George in the last act. "When Purcell died, English music was buried with him." And yet his genius was rather feminine, frail and delicate—aristocratic and dignified—and did not express certain essential elements in the English character. For Rolland believed that "terrible passions slumbered in the English nature" and had not found an outlet in the music of that most gracious and poetic figure, or in that of any of his contemporaries.

Rolland had an encyclopaedic knowledge of music. He was as much at home in the works of Rameau and Lully as in those of Berlioz and Wagner. His collections of essays entitled 'Musicians of Former Days' and 'Musicians of To-Day' revealed not only his charming gift as a brilliant musical essayist (*e.g.* his article on Mozart), but also his profound insight into the psychology of the great composers whom he so skilfully analysed. He found the man as fascinating as his music, and combined a deep appreciation of the one with an intense interest in the other. His essay on Berlioz is a triumph of vivid portraiture and a moving, singularly just tribute to a great and so frequently misunderstood figure. His fine portrait of Hugo Wolf (the first important article on this composer ever published in France) is one of his most gripping and poignant essays. In both studies Rolland reveals the cool and unprejudiced mind of the scholar and historian, no less than the insight, vision and passion of the poet. It is curious how his most gifted pupils in the realm of criticism seem dry and academic beside him.

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genius; his championship of the almost forgotten Ludovic Vitet, the brilliant and singularly penetrating dramatist of the religious wars in France, is worth mentioning. But in both cases Rolland has been a voice crying in the wilderness.

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voice, the greatest poet of the Revolution, the artist who had most vividly painted the tempests of Napoleonic times, with their anguish, sorrow and turbulence, and the intoxicated transports of a free spirit."

Rolland's early biography of Beethoven (written in a few days) was his first great success and added greatly to his reputation. Charles Péguy termed it "a moral revelation of the very highest significance". It has, indeed, become a kind of minor classic. It awakened, in my opinion, a disproportionate amount of interest; it tended to over-sentimentalize Beethoven, and Rolland himself did not rate it very highly. But it certainly did draw attention to the heroic qualities of the great musician, and it described his sufferings and his struggles with genuine pathos. Perhaps, in a sense, it started a new type of musical biography instinct with humanity. Yet it was in Rolland's later work on 'Beethoven the Creator' that he revealed not merely his sympathy—deep as it was—but the accuracy of his scholarship and the profundity of his knowledge. He eloquently defended 'Fidelio', which he had always considered one of Beethoven's masterpieces and most unjustly belittled. He admitted the weaknesses of the first act, but he considered the second act "a unique masterpiece that had no forerunner and has had no successor in the musical theatre".

He had, however, his prejudices: for example, he detested Mendelssohn's music and loved his letters. He imagined that Mendelssohn had mistaken his vocation. "It would have been better if he had devoted himself to literature instead of to music", he once wrote provocatively. "Anyhow, he was just an amiable man, and that was all." Whoever has waded through Mendelssohn's charming, but somewhat vapid correspondence will be amazed that so penetrating a critic as Rolland could have preferred it to the 'Hebrides' or 'Midsummer Night's Dream' overture.

As for France, he believed that she was more fruitful in other arts than in music, though in that sphere she had occasional amazing flights. Thus, apart from Molière, he could not find a genius equal to that of Rameau in the reign of Louis XIV; he believed that Rameau had founded French dramatic art in music. On the other hand he had little genuine sympathy with modern French music, though in his essays he was determined to be as objective and impartial as possible. Neither Debussy nor Ravel really appealed to him, though he resigned from the Société des Amis de la Musique when they excluded Ravel from their programmes. He, however, preferred even Stravinsky to them. He felt in Debussy's art, as in that of Wagner, a terrible, devitalizing poison. He admired its restraint, its exquisite delicacy, its good taste—but then, in his heart of hearts, he never considered good taste a very essential quality in art. Vigour, sanity, passion, these were infinitely more important. He would have said with Bizet: "What does occasional vulgarity matter as long as you are sincere and genuine?" It is revealing to compare Rolland's painful effort to be fair to an uncongenial musician in his well-known essay on 'Pelléas' with the zest and enthusiasm with which he discusses Berlioz. "Heroic action, the intoxication of reason and laughter, the passion for light"—these were, in his opinion, typical French qualities; they overflowed in French literature: he found them, above all, in Rabelais (to whom even Jean-Christophe turned for inspiration), in Molière and in Diderot. But in French music he missed them: he could discern them only in Berlioz and Bizet, and he adored both these ardent and brilliant composers, even though he felt that a cruel destiny and perhaps certain defects of character and judgment had prevented them from doing full justice to their splendid gifts. It was the popular

element in their music that impressed him most strongly and that he continually emphasized ; they did not appeal to the *élite*, like a Debussy or a Racine, but to the whole people, as the greatest artists always do. He believed that Berlioz, "the most mediterranean of all composers", had laid the strong foundation for a national and popular music in France, and that, though less master of himself than Wagner, he was fundamentally more original. As for Bizet, he considered him as the most spontaneous and buoyant of all French musicians, and regarded his early death as one of the major tragedies of music. In him he discerned the elements of a popular movement that was revitalizing art by seeking inspiration from popular melody and by translating into music popular feelings. He was a kind of French Mussorgsky, less visionary and sombre, but with more gaiety and *joie de vivre*. Rolland once said to me : "Here is genuinely popular music that stimulates to action and that quickens the rhythm of life". And he, indeed, believed that this should be the function of all true music. Without this popular spirit he was convinced that nothing truly lasting could ever be achieved. Already in his youth he had declared that Monteverdi's greatest merit was that he had courageously appealed to the people against the *élite*. When the operatic theatre became the mere recreation of an *élite* it inevitably degenerated. Much as he appreciated Wagner, he felt that his art was fundamentally aristocratic, morbid and even decadent, that there was in it an element that paralysed the will, the very desire to live (e.g. "O, sink hernieder, Nacht der Liebe, gieb Vergessen, dass ich lebe" : 'Tristan'). True, he admired the sobriety, the intensity, the fine seriousness of 'Tristan', and in a moment of enthusiasm he wrote :

It is a lesson for dramatists to see a man suppressing all frivolous trifling and empty episodes in order to concentrate entirely on the inner life of two living souls. In that Wagner is our master, a better, stronger, more profitable master to follow, in spite of his mistakes, than all the other literary and dramatic authors of his time.

He told me that when creating his vast revolutionary cycle ('Le Théâtre de la Révolution') he had frequently thought of Wagner's 'Ring', and that the great musician's example had been a guiding light to him. But later on his enthusiasm waned, and he shrank from him with a distaste no less intense than that of Nietzsche.

Though Rolland's work on the history of music is looked upon by some critics as his most permanent and solid achievement and likely to outlast all others (Prunières considered his decision to abandon musical criticism a real disaster, an irreparable loss to music), there can be no denying that his work as a novelist (also extremely closely connected with music) is of equal importance and interest. The first four volumes of 'Jean-Christophe' have rarely been surpassed for vividness, originality and sympathetic insight. There is a youthful buoyancy about this part of the novel that is very appealing. Alain has said : "The young will always read it, as they will always read 'David Copperfield'". Rolland at his best is a born narrator, almost the equal of Hardy in this respect. This gift is also occasionally displayed in his final great novel 'The Soul Enchanted', which was nicknamed in France *le roman fleuve* and almost completely ignored. I could feel how bitterly this lack of appreciation had hurt Rolland, and how this lengthiest of all his works was closest to his heart. "It's at least as good as 'Jean-Christophe'", he would say truculently, expecting to be contradicted, and he was delighted when I said that I thought there was nothing in 'Jean-Christophe' to equal the very best moments in 'The Soul Enchanted'. I was thinking of the death of the little girl and one or two other unforgettable things that only Rolland could have written. I was thinking of the bitter-sweet love of



Marc and Assia (what a great psychologist Rolland could be, perhaps one of the most profound psychologists in fiction). I was also thinking of the scenes leading up to Marc's assassination by the Fascists. With what uncanny skill does Rolland heighten the tension; and the catastrophe, when it comes, is overwhelming. No more poignant tribute to a victim of Fascism exists in fiction. No wonder Rolland was proud of this achievement, which he considered his very greatest; no wonder he was saddened by its poor reception in France and that his eyes lit up whenever it was mentioned. And yet, when all is said and done, it is not quite the equal of 'Jean-Christophe': it is more mature and penetrating, no doubt, but it no longer has that irresistible youthful buoyancy, and there are in it long stretches of dreary, arid journalism.

On the whole, however, Rolland was inclined to underrate his great achievements as a novelist and a music critic. He had grown a bit tired of 'Jean-Christophe' and his heroic biographies of Beethoven, Tolstoy and Michelangelo. He felt, on the other hand, that he had not been sufficiently appreciated as a dramatist. He adored the theatre, which he considered the most human, the most vivid and the most varied of all arts. And yet most of his plays had only had a *succès d'estime*, the thing he hated most of all. He loved the audience to be carried away and even to participate in the action. He told me that when his first play 'Les Loups' (a kind of imaginative reconstruction of the Dreyfus affair) was performed, the public was in a state of almost delirious excitement. When 'Danton' was produced by Reinhardt in Berlin in 1920 the audience could not refrain from shouting and was only prevented with difficulty from invading the stage. That, Rolland believed, was a good sign. There was nothing so fatal as well-behaved apathy. He wanted the audience to be composed of enthusiastic participants, not of frigid onlookers. He loved the Italian operatic theatre because of the zest and interest of the audiences, though he was once incensed at their rowdy behaviour during a performance of Bizet's 'Djamileh', which did not happen to appeal to them. Nevertheless, he felt that here was genuine popular art, though the quality of the music frequently left much to be desired. He liked neither Puccini nor Mascagni, and even Verdi left him rather cold. Yet he was an assiduous opera-goer.

In his own plays Rolland always insisted on the importance of incidental music. In none of his plays is music, however, allowed to call unnecessary attention to itself; but it is used with so much skill that the dramatic effect is immeasurably enhanced. There are several notable instances of this: the most striking of which is probably the weirdly impressive march by Gossec that lends a kind of ghastly dignity to the funeral of Marat in 'Le Triomphe de la raison'. In another revolutionary play, 'Le 14 Juillet', music (ably provided by Albert Doyen) also plays a leading part, particularly in the final scene of wild enthusiasm. At such moments Rolland intended it to be not merely a glittering background, but the very atmosphere of the drama and a powerful support for the action. Its chief purpose was "to fill those almost inevitable silences that emerge even in the most tumultuous crowd scenes and that tend to destroy the illusion of continuous life".

Rolland frequently and most effectively introduces music into other plays of his: one thinks of the musical interludes in his powerful drama (one of his masterpieces) 'Pâques fleuries'; they play a somewhat similar part to that of the famous intermezzo in 'Cavalleria rusticana' and constitute a haven of rest in the midst of tense and feverish action. He himself wrote a little-known overture and interludes for his mystical drama 'Saint-Louis'. "Even when creating my dramas", he remarks,

"my state of mind is always that of a musician". He loved what he termed *le mélodrame* (the play with rather elaborate incidental music), and he considered the two finest models of the genre to be Beethoven's 'Egmont' and Bizet's 'L'Arlésienne'. But he believed in the possibility of a yet closer and more intimate union between the spoken drama and music.

Praise of his neglected plays always affected Rolland very strongly. He showed me with almost childish delight an enthusiastic tribute from Bernard Shaw to one of his most pretentious and least inspired dramas, 'Liluli'—it was a rather incoherent mixture of French, German and English! It was a bitter disappointment to him that his own countrymen showed so little interest in his dramatic works and that they were comparatively rarely performed in Paris. The triumphant success of 'Le Jeu de l'Amour et de la Mort' at the Odéon was, however, a great encouragement to him.

He had a passionate interest in the French Revolution. "It has passed into my blood", he wrote to me; "I am not merely an author, but a participant in the events I describe." Nearly all his plays deal with that period. He had a profound understanding of the leaders of the revolution, particularly of Marat, Danton and Robespierre (so frequently branded as "the infernal triumvirate"). He regarded Robespierre as one of the noblest, most selfless and most misunderstood idealists in the history of mankind. Once, when I drew a comparison between Robespierre's cunning methods of discrediting his enemies and then getting rid of them and the somewhat similar tactics of Hitler, he was visibly hurt: to mention Robespierre and the German *Führer* in the same breath appeared to him little short of sacrilege. His last work was a very wordy and enthusiastic drama on the celebrated French revolutionary, a drama which he had been planning for many years, and in which the "sea-green Incorruptible" appears as a gentle and pathetic figure, who bears an extraordinary resemblance to his creator. But then Rolland occasionally dropped his objectivity and infused his own nobility of soul into characters who had relatively little of it. Yet it is only fair to add that he was fully justified in denouncing the absurd popular legend that Robespierre was merely a sanguinary monster.

Rolland had great qualities of mind and character. A profound and intense earnestness of moral tone distinguished not only his work but his whole life. He was essentially an idealist, a most generous champion of unpopular causes, a selfless and untiring friend of struggling authors and composers. Though always delicate and fragile—his life was a constant struggle against ill-health—he never spared himself when it was a question of helping others. He would answer in his own bold and imaginative handwriting the thousands of letters he received every year, and answer them not perfunctorily, but in the fullest detail. "My correspondence devours my life," he once remarked, but nothing could deter him from devoting himself to it as wholeheartedly as to his own literary work, even after nights of tormenting insomnia. Authorship for him was truly a vocation, even an apostolate.

What struck me most about him was his gentleness, his old-fashioned and delicate courtesy. He made one feel immediately at home, and he had a curiously winning smile. He was a very shy man, with little of Beethoven's or Jean-Christophe's virility and self-confidence, but his passionate interest in his fellow-creatures enabled him to overcome this disability. In spite of a legitimate pride in his own achievements, he was genuinely modest; rarely, if ever, have I come across a great man who had remained so completely unspoiled by fame and the adulation of the

world. And to get an idea of his success and unique prestige, one has only to glance through the pages of the '*Liber Amicorum Romain Rolland*', published in 1926 to commemorate his sixtieth birthday, with its innumerable enthusiastic tributes from famous statesmen, authors, musicians and scientists from every corner of the globe.

Occasionally Rolland received curious letters from people who imagined they knew his work and understood his mentality, and whose very first words revealed an almost terrifying incomprehension. Perhaps the strangest of all came from a German graduate about three years after Hitler's accession to power. He was engaged in writing a thesis about Rolland as a true Germanic type with strong Nazi tendencies, and he asked complacently: "What do you think of National Socialism now?" With admirable patience Rolland informed him that he was labouring under a complete misapprehension and had obviously not read any of his more recent works. He added a trifle ironically that he himself had no German blood, that he had written dozens of articles denouncing National Socialism as a form of degenerate barbarism, that every kind of racialism and chauvinistic nationalism was abhorrent to him, that his first wife was a French Jewess and his second a Russian Communist, and that he could only advise his correspondent to give up the thesis as a hopeless proposition. The obtuse German was profoundly shocked, but—strange to say—he persevered with his ridiculous task and finally produced a lengthy treatise in which Rolland was represented as a true Germanic type, a spiritual harbinger of National Socialism, a fanatical anti-Semite, a kind of second Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Which shows, as Rolland would have said, that you can prove anything in a thesis, even that Rossini was a disciple of Wagner's!

Rolland led a very secluded life. President Masaryk termed him "the hermit of Villeneuve". For twenty-five years he resided in a beautiful little villa on the shores of the lake of Geneva, not far from Byron's Castle of Chillon, but very much off the beaten track. From his window he could see some of the most magnificent mountain scenery in Switzerland. He loved travelling, but when I suggested that he should revisit his beloved Italy, he smiled sadly. He had no desire to see that lovely country under Fascist tyranny (he loathed Mussolini even more than Hitler, because an intelligent hypocrite was still more distasteful to him than the most brutal and cruel of fanatics), but he also felt that he would like to spend his last years in Switzerland, which had always appeared to him the sanctuary of the free. What prompted him shortly before the war to end his quarter-of-a-century of voluptuary exile and to return to his native country? It was a fatal decision: it led him straight to the Nazi concentration camp. But there was an element of unworldly idealism in Rolland that makes me feel that he foresaw that possibility, and perhaps even welcomed it. He had so often deplored the lack of harmony between a man's life and his work. When his country's very existence was threatened, as it had never been before, and by tyrants who had outraged his most cherished ideals, he returned to that country, which had often misunderstood him in the past, and willingly shared its dangers and its humiliations. He had a deep love of France, as deep, in its way, as his love of humanity. "I have devoted my whole life to promoting mutual understanding amongst men", he once said. Charity, humanity, mutual understanding and mutual forbearance—these were the guiding principles of his life. He was, indeed, more than a great writer; he was (to quote his own praise of Gluck) "a great man with a clean heart".



## MARY HARVEY—THE LADY DERING

By JESSICA M. KERR

As when a maide, taught from her mother's wing  
To tune her voyce unto a silver string,  
When she should run, she rests; rests, when should run,  
And ends her lesson, having now begun;  
Now misses she her step, then in her song,  
And doing of her best she still is wrong;  
Begins againe and yet againe strikes false,  
Then in a chafe forsakes her virginalls;  
And yet within an hour she tries a-new  
That with her dayly paines (art's chiefest due)  
She gaines that charming skill.<sup>1</sup>

HIDDEN away among the seldom-opened pages of Henry Lawes's 'Second Book of Select Ayres and Dialogues', published by John Playford in 1655, there are three songs of "The Lady Deering's Composing"<sup>2</sup>; on page 24—'When First I saw fair Doris' eyes', and 'And is this all? What one poor Kisse'; on page 25—'In vain fair Chloris, you designe'.<sup>3</sup> These three songs are the only ones in the collection which are not the work of Henry Lawes, and the book is dedicated to "The Honourable, the Lady Dering, wife of Sir Edward Dering of Surenden Dering, Baronet". Any claim that Mary Harvey, Lady Dering, may have to the recognition and interest of the student of English musical history lies in more than the intrinsic value of three charming but slight songs for solo voice in the lyric style. There is nothing exceptional or outstanding about the songs themselves. They echo the style of the period (mid-seventeenth century) and of her master, Henry Lawes; just as the verses which "her noble husband was pleased to give" echo the style affected by his better-known contemporaries in the world of poetry—Edmund Waller and Suckling. Standing alone on their merits as musical compositions, Lady Dering's three songs might never emerge from the obscurity of libraries and private collections—indeed, to the best of my knowledge, they have not yet done so. Even the added distinction of the dedication of his 'Second Book of Ayres and Dialogues' by Henry Lawes to a gifted pupil, who held music "in honour and esteem", does not seem to have stirred the smallest breath of interest in the identity and history of Lady Dering.

Yet there is much about this seventeenth-century Englishwoman that is worthy of recognition and should suffice to rescue her from oblivion, and to win for her a niche in the history of English music. For, failing the discovery of hitherto unknown evidence to the contrary, Mary Harvey, Lady Dering, appears to be the first woman in England whose musical compositions were published under her own name. The average musician in England would probably bestow this distinction unhesitatingly on Dame Ethel Smyth and confess to complete ignorance of any earlier claimants. There were, however, several women composers in England as early as the eighteenth century. Mrs. Chazell composed an organ concerto, overtures and music for violin and piano about the

<sup>1</sup>. 'Britannia's Pastorals'. Chalmers, 'English Poets', vol. vi, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>. The correct spelling of the name is Dering. Lawes, like many of his contemporaries, notably Pepys was most arbitrary in the matter of spelling names.

<sup>3</sup>. Of the three songs only one appears in later editions. 'In vain fair Chloris' is included in 'Select Ayres and Dialogues for One, Two and Three Voyces to the Theorbo-Lute or Basse-viol', John Playford, 1650; and in 'The Treasury of Music, containing Ayres and Dialogues to sing to the Theorbo-Lute or Basse-viol', &c., 1660.

middle of the century, as well as making a reputation as a conductor<sup>4</sup>; and she was followed by Maria Parke and Mary Linwood, the latter having two operas in manuscript to her credit. Mrs. A. T. King in an article in 'The Musical Courier' places Anna Eliza Bray somewhat categorically as the first English woman composer,<sup>5</sup> and it is high time that justice was done to Lady Dering in this respect. Doubtless she was by no means the first of her countrywomen to compose. Marie de France, greatest of the *jongleuses*, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Anne Boleyn are all known to have composed songs, and twelve of the songs of Marie de France are preserved in the British Museum. But all this was long before the days of music-printing, or any regular collections of solo songs for sale to the general public. Henry Lawes's collections of Ayres and Dialogues in 1653, 1655 and 1659 were, indeed, among the very first of their kind, and John Playford, the publisher, was a pioneer in this field.

It is a noteworthy fact that, although women in Tudor and Elizabethan England took an active part in musical life, there is no evidence to show that they attempted any serious study in the field of composition.<sup>6</sup> In the poetry, prose and drama of the period there are many references to women as performers on virginals, harpsichord, lute, viols and recorders; but it would seem that marriage, as a rule, put an end to music-making—probably because the cares of housekeeping and motherhood left but little leisure for artistic pursuits. Nor was there much encouragement for women from the opposite sex. Count Castiglione's rules for the perfect gentlewoman were influential in the moulding of the typical Cavalier lady for many years after his work was published, and he requires therein that a gentlewoman should not be seen "singing or playinge upon instrumentes those harde and often divisions that declare more counninge than sweetness"; and, if she dances or plays she should be brought to it "with suffering herself somewhat to be prayed and with a certain basfulness that may declare the noble shamefastnes that is contrarye to headiness".<sup>7</sup>

Here is no encouragement for a woman virtuoso! Small wonder, then, that Richard Burton wrote of the young ladies in the early part of the century: "They that being maids took so much pains to sing, play and dance, with such charge and cost to their parents to get them these graceful qualities, now being married will scarce touch an instrument—they care not for it".

On the Continent, in Italy and France, women had already achieved considerable success as composers as early as 1586, when Maddalena Casulana published two volumes of madrigals in Italy. In France Clementine de Bourges had composed a four-part chorus before 1562—the approximate date of her death; and she is described in Grove's Dictionary as "a real genius". About the same time that Lady Dering was born, Barbara Strozzi was at the height of her career in Venice, and her compositions included cantatas, madrigals, sacred songs and an opera. In 1645 John Evelyn describes his meeting with the daughter of Dominico Bassano "that played and sung to nine instruments, with that skill and address as few masters in Italy exceeded her; she likewise composed divers excellent pieces. . . . She presented me afterward with two recitatives of hers, both words and music".<sup>8</sup> A little later,

<sup>4</sup> Pepys wrote (June 4th 1661): "heard musique at the Globe, and saw the simple motion that is there of a woman with a rod in her hand keeping time to the musique while it plays, which is simple, methinks".

<sup>5</sup> 'Women as Composers', 'Musical Courier', August 14th 1919.

<sup>6</sup> John Evelyn said of his beloved and gifted daughter Mary that "she could compose happily and put in pretty symbols as in the 'Mundus Muliebris'" (his own poem). Diary (ed. 1819), vol. i, pp. 90-4.

<sup>7</sup> 'Book of the Courtier' by Castiglione. Trans. by Sir Thomas Hoby, 1561.

<sup>8</sup> Diary of John Evelyn. October 10th 1645.

Antonia Bembo, composer to the Court of Louis XIV, offers another example of the distinction attained by French and Italian women as creative musicians. The close cultural relationship at that time between Italy and France would account in some measure for the superiority of the French women over their English sisters across the channel; but the wide discrepancy in standard between such advanced work, both choral and instrumental, as that of Antonia Bembo and the slight simple songs of Lady Dering is hard to explain.

In the matter of women composers "ye English", to quote Roger North, certainly "brought up ye rere"—and this in spite of the fact that every phase of English seventeenth-century life was saturated with music and song. The conditions, indeed, were much the same in other intellectual fields, such as literature, art and drama; and it would seem that the fault lay, not with women themselves, not in any inherent lack of creative ability, but rather with the conditions under which they lived both before and after marriage.\* They were hindered and restricted by standards and shibboleths over which they had no control, and with which they were obliged to comply or pay the penalty of social ostracism. Those intrepid few who stepped across the lines prescribed for them, forfeited the respect of contemporary society; but we know them now to have been pioneers and martyrs in the cause of feminine emancipation. Those courageous few included the first women to appear on the stage—an innovation attributed at the time to the frivolous influence of "the giddy French"—and who accepted the moral stigma entailed by such a step; and the first woman dramatist—Aphra Behn—who preferred independence and creative freedom to security and obscurity, flouted respectability. Rebellion was in the air. Nicholas Rowe's heroine, Calista in 'The Fair Penitent', voiced it when she said:

Wherefore are we  
Born with high souls, but to assert ourselves,  
Shake off this vile obedience they exact,  
And claim an equal empire o'er the world.

But even so it was with doubts and tremors that Mrs. Katherine Philips permitted publication of her translation of Corneille's 'Pompey' under her own name; and we know now how she dreaded the unseemly publicity so detrimental to her womanhood which she felt must follow. We can imagine with what apprehensions Lady Dering allowed her songs to appear over her name, although she and her husband must have been flattered by the dedication from so distinguished a musician as Henry Lawes.

The difficulties attending the task of rescuing Lady Dering from undeserved oblivion have been much intensified by present world conditions, which have prohibited any research in England, except through the somewhat uncertain agency of the mails. Nevertheless, it has been possible to trace some of her early history, the romantic facts concerning her marriage, her connection with the leading English musician of her day and her close relationship with the unique circle grouped around the striking figure of Mrs. Katherine Philips, the first

\* Alas! a woman that attempts the pen,  
Such a presumptuous creature is esteemed,  
The fault can by no virtue be redeemed.  
They tell us we mistake our sex and way;  
Good breeding, fashion, dancing, dressing, play,  
Are the accomplishments we should desire;  
To write or read, or think or to enquire,  
Would cloud our beauty, and exhaust our time,  
And interrupt the conquests of our prime.  
While the dull manage of a servile house  
Is held by some our utmost art and use.

Anne Finch, Lady Winchelsea.



English poetess, known to literature under the admiring pseudonym of "The Matchless Orinda".<sup>10</sup> If Mary Harvey was indeed the first English woman composer, then her friendship with "Orinda" is one of the most interesting phases of her story.

Mary Harvey was born in 1629.<sup>11</sup> Daughter of Daniel Harvey of Folkestone, Kent, and Combe in Surrey, and of his wife, Elizabeth Kynnersley. The exact date of Mary's birth is uncertain, but her baptism on September 3rd is recorded, and it was usual for children to be baptized very soon after birth. Daniel Harvey was known as a "Turkey Merchant"—a title bestowed on those who traded with the Levant—and a merchant of the East India Company. The family was an old one, and Mary was descended, through her grandfather, Thomas Harvey of Kent, from Sir Walter Harvey, who was warden (or mayor) of London in 1272. Old Sir Walter was known as "Pepperer Harvey"—a title given at that time to members of the Grocers' Company, as it came to be called later on: which points to the Harveys as having been merchants of repute for several centuries. Mary's father was a citizen of good standing, with decided Royalist sympathies. He must have been a man of considerable fortune, for it has been suggested that Sir Edward Dering married Mary Harvey in order to restore the family fortunes, sadly depleted during the Civil War; and Mary was given a marriage portion of three thousand pounds—a large sum in those days. That Daniel Harvey for his part was not blind to the social advantages of the union is indicated by the stipulation he made before giving his daughter in marriage—that he should be buried in the Derings' family vault in the church at Pluckley, Kent. The Derings gave reluctant consent, and when the old man died some six months after the wedding, his wishes were carried out. No instructions having been left, however, regarding the placing of the coffin, it was up-ended in a corner of the vault; and after many years, collapsing from decay, it crashed to the ground during worship, to the alarm and consternation of the worshippers.<sup>12</sup>

Wealthy and worthy as he undoubtedly was, Daniel Harvey was a man of little consequence in comparison with his famous brother, the brilliant scientist, William Harvey, whose discoveries concerning the circulation of the blood were hailed by Sir Thomas Browne as even more important than the discoveries which were being made in the American continent at that time. There is no doubt about William's political leanings—he was left in charge of the young princes during the battle of Edgehill, where he is said to have grown weary of the scene and to have sat in the shelter of a ditch, reading a book.<sup>13</sup>

Mary's sister Elizabeth married Heneage Finch, nephew of Francis Finch. An almost forgotten minor poet of the seventeenth century, Francis Finch was one of the little group gathered round "the Matchless Orinda", who bestowed on him the pseudonym of "the Excellent Palaemon", and he contributed a dedicatory poem and the words of one song to Lawes's "Second Book of Select Ayres and Dialogues".

Daniel Harvey, Mary's younger brother, married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward, second Lord Montague, and a cousin of the Earl of Sandwich, distinguished patron of Samuel Pepys. Young Daniel had an eventful

<sup>10</sup> For much of my material I have drawn freely upon two books: "Henry Lawes" by Willa McClung Evans and "The Matchless Orinda" by Philip W. Souers, and am much indebted to both these authors for facts concerning the Derings.

<sup>11</sup> In the fourth year of the reign of Charles I.

<sup>12</sup> For many interesting facts concerning the family of Dering, of Surrenden-Dering, Pluckley, Kent, I am indebted to Dr. Clarke of Pluckley, who has been most kind in sending me material and photographs.

<sup>13</sup> After the surrender of Oxford, Sir William Harvey came to live with his brother Eliab in his fine city mansion opposite the church of St. Lawrence, Pountney. Both Eliab and Daniel Harvey were rich and distinguished merchants on the hill—Pountney Hill (Aubrey's "Lives", vol. iii, p. 380).

career. Like the Montagues, into whose family he had married, he was frequently involved in Royalist plots, and his services were duly recognized by Charles II, who conferred a knighthood upon him at the Restoration. He lived with his wife at Richmond, and it is interesting to note that it was to his house that the notorious Lady Castlemaine fled after one of her quarrels with her royal lover. Daniel fought under Albemarle against the Dutch in 1666,<sup>14</sup> and later he went as ambassador to Constantinople and died while there. His wife was a niece of William Montague who had married "Orinda's" closest friend, "Rosania"—Mary Aubrey. Mary Harvey is said to have been devoted to her sister-in-law, and it is not surprising, in view of all these various connections by marriage, that the Derings were drawn into the orbit of "Orinda's" circle.

But there was an even stronger tie. Katherine Philips, Mary Aubrey and Mary Harvey were schoolfellows at Mrs. Salmon's school in Hackney—one of the many "Shee-schools" (as Thomas Fuller called them) that sprang up in such numbers during the seventeenth century—such as Mr. Priest's school where Purcell's *Dido* and *Aeneas* was performed some fifty years later. In writing of Katherine Philips, John Aubrey, the antiquary, who was Mary Aubrey's uncle, records that "She went to school at Hackney to Mrs Salmon, a famous schoolmistress . . . Amici (friends) Mrs Mary Aubrey and Mrs . . . Harvey, since Lady (Sir . . .) Deering". In his *Miscellanies*, however, Aubrey condemns the Hackney schools as encouraging pride and wantonness. Of these three friends, Katherine Philips was to be later acclaimed as the first English poetess; Mary Aubrey ("Orinda" calls her "Mistress Awbrey") won for herself a small but secure niche in English literature as "Orinda's" beloved "Rosania"—

Soul of my Soul, my Joy, my Crown, my Friend.

Lastly, Mary Harvey married the heir of Surrenden-Dering in Kent, one of the oldest families in England,<sup>15</sup> and became the first English woman composer of published songs. Professor Souers suggests that the identity of Mary Harvey was almost certainly hidden under the pseudonym of "Philoclea" or "Ardelia", to both of whom poems were addressed; any attempt to be more definite than this would be sheer guess-work, and the poems themselves provide no clue.

Mary probably spent some years at Mrs. Salmon's school. The curious story of her matrimonial escapade is dated 1654, at which time she would have been barely sixteen years of age; and as Katherine Philips entered the school when she was only eight years old, it seems to have been customary for girls to enter school very young and to remain there until they were of marriageable age—which was often as young as fifteen or sixteen. The young ladies learnt Latin and French, "all manner of cookery", fancy needle-work and dancing. Music seems to have been an important part of the curriculum in these early seventeenth-century schools just before the Civil War and during the Commonwealth; and girls like Mary Evelyn, gifted daughter of the diarist, Lucy Hutchinson and Susannah Perwich learnt to play the harpsichord or virginals, the lute and viols, and to sing sweetly. So it is more than likely that Mary Harvey had learnt a certain amount of music before she began her lessons with Henry Lawes.

<sup>14</sup> Pepys wrote (June 6th 1666): "Mighty pleased with this day's happy news, and the more because confirmed by Sir Daniel Harvey". And John Evelyn wrote (the same date): "Came Sir Daniel Harvey from the General and related the dreadful encounter".

<sup>15</sup> The Dering family traces its history back to Saxon times. One ancestor, Norman Fitz Dering, Sheriff of Kent, was slain at the battle of Lincoln, near the person of King Stephen; another, Fitz Seyd Dering was killed by King Harold's men at Hastings; while even farther back, a certain "Sir Dering" was witness to the deed by which King Ethelulf granted certain lands to the Church at Rochester in 880. The name—Dering—comes from the Saxon word meaning "terror".

Before Mary Harvey's marriage to Sir Edward Dering at the age of nineteen, there had taken place the "matrimonial escapade" referred to above. There are at least two accounts of this incident. That of Sir Roger Twysdon, friend and neighbour of Sir Edward Dering, is quoted first as being the more charitable and at the same time the more likely of the two. The incident itself is both unusual and interesting, and it is easy to imagine what a stir it must have caused in the Harvey family.

Let no woman who hath any misfortune in any kind unfit for a wife, and after comes to bee marriedd conceale it from her husband, I myself have . . . the experience of it in a very good friend of mine Sir Edward Dering, who marriedd Mistres Mary Harvey, daughter of Danyell Harvey, a merchant of London, and was indeed contracted if not married to one William Hauke her cousin and her father's servant, one who had been his apprentice, but was now free, he in a morning going through Colman's Streete with her got her very young into a church and did with a ring marry her about 1645, and caused it to be registered in the book of Marriages of the parish: she was in this to bee excused because he assured her he had her father's consent . . . but her speaking very softly at the tyme so as it could not be disposed she did assent unto it, and her the very day returning him his ring and dysclaiming it and never suffering him to come neare her, and her youth capable of being deceived, with the good friends her father made . . . so far that after a legal hearing in the Ecclesiastical Courts (for they were not then quite put-downe) she was by sentence cleared, and after to be married to Sir Edward Dering 1646 or 1647.<sup>16</sup> Her friends and she told him all the fact and showed him her sentence of being free under the seal of the Court, and they have lived very loving ever since. (She was a good wife and a means of advancing the family.)<sup>17</sup>

The second account, which throws a less favourable light on the story, is interesting also for the glimpse it gives of the ways of ecclesiastical courts. It appears in Hasted's 'History of Kent'.

That Daniel Harvey, her father, an eminent citizen of London, and great loyalist at the death of King Charles I had this Mary . . . heir to all his wealth: at the same time he had an apprentice in his house, his first cousin, who found an opportunity of marrying the daughter clandestinely, and had bedded with her twelve months before the marriage was discovered, which was occasioned by her father's intention of marrying her to Sir Edward Dering; on which he found means to get the marriage dissolved, and obtained testimonials for it, not only from Bishop Juxon,<sup>18</sup> but from the most eminent civilians of that time. Two of their opinions were: One, that the young man's father was great-uncle to her, and he being dead, his son represented him, and consequently was great-uncle to her; the other that it was so notorious a breach of honesty in him, that no state should suffer so bad an example to be countenanced. Some years ago, the late Mr. Eliab Harvey, king's council, found this relation, with the above-mentioned opinions in a black box among his family papers.<sup>19</sup>

Whichever version of Mary Harvey's strange escapade is true, the fact remains that the marriage with Sir Edward Dering did turn out well, and that she was a "good wife" until his death in 1684, as Sir Roger Twysden pointed out. The marriage took place at the church of St. Bartholomew's-the-Less, on April 5th 1648, less than a year before the tragic scene at Whitehall, when the head of an English King fell from his shoulders, and with it the hopes of all the Royalists in England or in exile. Sir Edward Dering's beautiful home in Kent, where the Dering family had lived without break since the reign of Henry VI (1422-1461), was sacked four times by the Roundheads. Tradition holds that a member of the Dering family escaped from Cromwell's soldiers by one of the rather odd-shaped windows that are characteristic of the great house, as well as of many smaller houses in the district; and

<sup>16</sup> The year of the marriage was 1648.

<sup>17</sup> From the 'Notebook' of Sir Roger Twysden, BM. Add. MSS. 34, 164, f.94b, quoted in 'The Life and Times of Dr. William Harvey' by Sir Wilmot Herringham, K.C., C.B., M.D., F.R.C.P. Annals of Medical History, 1932.

<sup>18</sup> This is the famous Bishop Juxon, a great seventeenth-century ecclesiastical figure, who was chosen by Charles I to stand beside him on the scaffold.

<sup>19</sup> E. Hasted. 'History of Kent', 1886, vol. VII, p. 469.



that when the building was renovated, the shape of the windows was carefully preserved.<sup>20</sup> Sir Edward Dering, the heir, is thought to have been abroad during the Civil War, at the University of Leyden. Surrenden-Dering was probably restored for Lady Dering, and she and her husband lived for fourteen years a life of retirement from public affairs, either in Kent or London. Shortly before the Restoration, Sir Edward returned to political life and became a Commissioner of the Kent Militia, and a Deputy Lieutenant under the Earl of Winchilsea, who described him as "not only a very wise and sober man, but very well affected towards our King and Church".

As a collaborator with his wife, providing the lyrics for her songs (in itself, surely, a unique partnership in English music!) Sir Edward Dering, second baronet, has some claim to our interest. Educated at Emanuel College, Cambridge, and at Leyden University, he succeeded to the title on the death of his father, also Sir Edward Dering, in 1644, at the age of eighteen. It seems certain that he became a member of the Matchless Orinda's circle in consequence of his marriage, and he is probably better known to-day as "the Noble Silvander"—the name bestowed upon him by Orinda—than on account of his various political appointments, or his 'Parliamentary Diary' recently published.<sup>21</sup> His contributions to English verse consist of the three lyrics written for his wife; some introductory verses to an edition of Cartwright's poems, 1651, a poem sent to the Matchless Orinda, the original of which no longer exists, but which is quoted in part by her in her reply<sup>22</sup>; and lastly the Epilogue to Orinda's 'Pompey', first performed at Dublin in 1662, which she was pleased to describe as "the best writ that ever I read any thing of that kind". At the time Sir Edward was at Dublin as one of six Commissioners for the Settlement of Ireland, and it is likely that his wife was able to continue at Dublin the schoolgirl friendship begun at Hackney.

Lady Dering's music lessons with Henry Lawes must have begun soon after her marriage. The payment of "one pound, ten shillings for a month's teaching of my wife" is recorded in 'The Household Book of Sir Edward Dering', 1648-1652. The original of this interesting book is in the British Museum,<sup>23</sup> but an account of it appeared in an article by Rimbault in 'Notes and Queries'.<sup>24</sup> Besides the reference to the sum paid to Henry Lawes, the article quotes other items from Sir Edward's accounts in the years immediately following his marriage, which give some light on his activities at that time. A sum of one pound, six shillings is paid for "seeing two plaies with my wife, etc, coach hire, etc," for July 31st 1648—the year of their marriage. In the same year three pounds, ten shillings is paid for "a counterpayne to the yellow perpetuana bed", perpetuana being a woollen fabric very popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on account of its durability—hence its name! On another occasion, the following year, they visit Rotherhampton House, and he gives Lady Dering "a black satin gown, and two diamond rings" and "velvet saddle furniture". In the same year that he paid Mr. Lawes for the music lessons—which were in all probability combined singing and harpsichord lessons—there is an account of a trip made by Sir Edward with his bride to Tonbridge, where they spent

<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to note that Surrenden-Dering, which was sold in 1928 and became a boys' school, was evacuated at the beginning of the war, and is now used to house troops. So that for the first time in three hundred years Surrenden-Dering has been once more "occupied" by soldiery!

<sup>21</sup> 'The Parliamentary Diary of Sir Edward Dering', 1670-1673. Ed. by Basil Duke Henning. Yale University Press, 1940.

<sup>22</sup> 'To Sir Edward Dering (the Noble Silvander) on his Dream and Navy, personating Orinda's preferring Rosania before Solomon's Traffick to Ophir'. 'Poems', 1678, p. 17.

<sup>23</sup> B.M. Add. MSS. 22,466.

<sup>24</sup> 'Notes and Queries', January 12th 1880.

nineteen days; a visit to the "Spring Gardens" and the buying of "baubles at Bartholomew Fayre". But perhaps most interesting of all are the references to two portraits of Lady Dering—one painted by Sir Peter Lely and the other by the artist Le Neve. Sir Edward paid fifteen pounds in all to Sir Peter Lely for the portrait of Lady Dering "being larger"—he only paid five pounds for his own portrait. It is worthy of note that on March 15th 1666 Samuel Pepys paid fourteen pounds to the artist Hayls for his wife's portrait—"a most pretty picture". Sir Edward, however, pays four pounds for a frame, while Pepys only paid one pound, five shillings for his!

From these notes in Sir Edward Dering's 'Household Book' it has been possible to trace and reproduce the Lely portrait, which was reproduced in the Sales Catalogue of the Dering estate in 1928. The actual whereabouts of the portrait at this time is not yet discovered. No trace can be found of the portrait by Le Neve for which the artist was paid only six pounds!

The same article by Rimbault refers to the Derings as lovers of music and draws attention to the distinguished career of a namesake, Richard Dering, who sprang from another branch of Kent Derings, and whose music was so much admired by Oliver Cromwell.

Henry Lawes had been in contact with the Dering family for some years before he was asked to give music lessons to Lady Dering. When Sir Edward's father was Deputy to the Lord Warden of the Ports in 1638, Lawes is known to have appealed to him for help in procuring a passport for his friend, the young poet John Milton, who was planning to make the grand tour; which postulates a slight acquaintance, at least, made in all probability, through Lawes's position at Court. But even without this slender contact with the Dering family it is more than likely that Lawes would have been chosen to teach Sir Edward's young bride. He was at this time at the height of his career as a teacher, though his fortunes as a composer were at a low ebb. Like most other musicians attached to the Court of Charles I he found himself, after the outbreak of the Civil War, without position, employment or patronage, and deprived even of the opportunity of composing music for the church. Between 1649 and 1660, therefore, Lawes turned his attention to teaching music, with much success; and in 1651 John Playford, the music publisher, printed a list of the best music-masters in London, giving first place to Henry Lawes. Hawkins wrote of him: "He betook himself to the teaching of ladies to sing, and by his irreproachable life and gentlemanly deportment contributed more than all musicians of his time to raise the credit of his profession".<sup>25</sup> His former connections with the Court certainly helped Lawes to find pupils among the ladies of distinguished families; and his connection with the circle of the Matchless Orinda shows clearly the kind of society among which he found his pupils. That his person and his music were patronized by some of the highest in the land is indicated by a reference to "hearing music in one Mr. Lawes his house" in the diary of the Duchess of Newcastle, and by the verses prefixed to the 1653 edition of the 'Ayres and Dialogues', from the pen of Edward Philips, Milton's nephew.<sup>26</sup>

While brightest Dames the splendour of the Court  
Themselves a silent Musick to the Eye,  
Would oft to hear thy solemn Ayres resort,  
Making thereby a double Harmony:  
Tis hard to judge which adds the most delight,  
To th' Eare thy Charms, or theirs unto the sight.

<sup>25</sup> Hawkins, 'History of Music', Chapter cxxi.

<sup>26</sup> Edward Philips, like his poet uncle, was well informed musically, and he took an active part in the wordy battle between Matthew Locke and Solomon in 1673, adding his 'Duellum Musicum' to Locke's 'Practice of Music Vindicated'.

Of those who gathered at "Mr. Lawes, his house" to hear and make music, Lady Dering and her husband were undoubtedly a part—in the case of Lady Dering an active part. Judging by her songs, which according to the dedication, had "recieved [*sic*] much lustre from your performing of them", she had a high sweet voice. Probably she would have sung the songs of her own composing with her master at the harpsichord and her husband among the audience of distinguished persons. Such gatherings were as yet very rare: but the restrictions placed upon public performances of music had stimulated the taste for informal concerts in private homes. These assemblies presented an ideal opportunity for such a frail talent as Lady Dering's, at a time when the solo voice was still a delightful novelty. But such soft sweet tones as hers singing to the harpsichord in a quiet room—yes, even the songs themselves—were soon to be laid away as things of the past with the lutes, viols and recorders.

The death of Lawes soon after the coronation must have cast a cloud over the happiness which followed the Restoration in Royalist circles. He died in October 1662, the last musical link with Shakespeare and the Elizabethans. The blow may have been softened for Lady Dering by her husband's departure for Ireland that same year, but her music lessons probably ceased then, never to be resumed.

Direct references to Lady Dering seem to be so rare that it is particularly interesting to find mention of her in the letters of Henry More to Lady Conway at this time. These letters appear in an exhaustive study of the correspondence of, and relating to, Anne Finch, Lady Conway, by Professor Marjorie Hope Nicholson, quoted here with her permission.<sup>27</sup> Letter No. 128 in this collection is from Henry More to Lady Conway, who was at that time in Ireland:

I told you in my last that I had sent two copys of my book to Sir Edward Deering, (the one for my Lord, and the other for yourself) to be convey'd to you. If he be arriv'd to you, I pray you Madam lett me beg the favour of presenting my humble service to him and his Lady Who will be excellent good comparie for you.

"His Lady" is, of course, Lady Dering. Lady Conway replied to this letter as follows (No. 129):

My returne to towne was welcomed by yours of August 5. and by the noble present you made me of your excellent book which Sir Edward Deering delivered me. . . . Sir E. Deering his Lady is not here.

In reply (No. 130) Henry More again refers to Lady Dering, and seems anxious that the two ladies should meet in Dublin:

I Hope your Ladiship has receiv'd my last letter by this, dated the 5th of this month, as also that Sir Edward has arrived by this at Dublin, to whom I beg the presentment of my humble service, as also to his vertuous Lady, who will be good companie for your Ladiship, though I doubt not but you are excellently well provided for . . .

The great William Harvey was a distant kinsman of the Conway family through the marriage of his niece, Elizabeth, Lady Dering's sister, with Heneage Finch, later Earl of Nottingham; and was called in to prescribe for Lady Conway, who suffered almost all her life from violent headaches. A letter dated March 31st 1656, from Heneage Finch to Sir Edward Dering, suggests that the relationship between the two families was of the friendliest kind:

I shall then, God willing, be at home upon Tuesday night, at farthest upon Wednesday. Which is the very day upon which you give mee Hopes of seeing you and my sister here, the highest refreshment that I know how to wish for at my return. . . . My wife desires earnestly to be remembered to my sister and you, and hopes to see my Cosin Ned here when she comes, and therefore she doth specially

<sup>27</sup>. 'The Conway Letters' by Marjorie Hope Nicholson. Yale University Press, 1950.



invite him. But I hope there need no invitations hither, where there is no interest greater than your Own, nor any use of the House so pleasing as by your Company. And I pray let my Cosin Betty come a Maying to Hide Park too.

"Cosin Ned" referred to in the above letter is, of course, Sir Edward Dering. "Cosin Betty" would most likely refer to Elizabeth, sister of Sir Edward, who married Sir John Darell of Calehill. The letter goes on to describe a sad mishap to "Cosin Betty Harvey", who must have been the wife of Lady Dering's brother, Daniel Harvey, and closes with an affectionate message to Lady Dering:

My Cosin Betty Harvey hath had a very sad Fall at Harrow on the hill, and is miserably bruised by it, and bled very much. It is much wonder that she scaped with her life, though God be prayed she is likely to Scape without a Scarr too. I pray present my service to my sister, and salute all my little Cosins from me.

Sir Edward's various political appointments kept him in Ireland until 1669, and on his return to England he became extremely active in political life there. By this time he and his wife were raising a large family at Surrenden-Dering. A genealogical table of the family records the birth of ten children, and "other issue".<sup>88</sup> An heir was born in 1650, two years after their marriage, and four more sons and five daughters are mentioned.<sup>89</sup> Sir Edward died in 1684 at the age of fifty-nine. In spite of the delicacy of his few verses he must have been a fairly robust specimen of the English country squire, for on his deathbed he asked his son to see that he had enough beer, saying: "Since I must die I will die playing the good fellow in small beer". His wife survived him by twenty years, living to the great age of seventy-five, and was buried in the family vault at Pluckley.

The 'Second Book of Ayres and Dialogues' published by John Playford in 1655 stands as a kind of memorial to Katherine Philips—"the Matchless Orinda"—and her circle of friends, and to the brief career of England's first woman composer. Lawes himself was the "Gentle Thirsis" of Orinda's group, a name bestowed upon him, doubtless, in recognition of his part in the first performance of Milton's 'Comus'; and Orinda herself wrote commendatory verses for the 'Ayres and Dialogues'. Others who contributed verses were Mary Knight, the singer and friend of Orinda,<sup>90</sup> Dr. Charles Coleman and Dr. John Wilson—all friends in the musical world—and the poet John Birkenhead. Besides those by Orinda and Sir Edward Dering, the collection contains verses by Francis Finch, Edmund Waller, Thomas Carew, Mr. R. Herrick and William Cartwright.

The dedication so charmingly addressed to Lady Dering indicates her love for music and that the songs in the book had been sung by her to the approval of her master. It draws attention to the collaboration between husband and wife, and points out that Lady Dering was an industrious pupil as well as a composer "so good that few of any sex have arriv'd at such perfection". It tells us that Lady Dering's mother, only lately dead (May 7th 1655), who had delighted in her daughter's singing, was a pious and charitable woman; and, lastly, that Sir Edward

<sup>88</sup> Francis Haselwood, 'Genealogical Memoranda relating to the Family of Dering of Surrenden-Dering in the Parish of Pluckley, Kent', 1876.

<sup>89</sup> John Evelyn mentions meeting one daughter, May 1st 1680: "This afternoon came to visit me Sir Edward Dering of Surrenden in Kent, one of the Lords of the Treasury, with his daughter, married to my worthy friend, Sir Robert Southwell, Clerk of the Council, now Extraordinary Envoy to the Duke of Brandenburg, and other Princes in Germany, as before he had been in Portugal, being a sober, wise, and virtuous gentleman". This was Elizabeth. Another daughter married Sir Thomas Knatchbull, also mentioned by Evelyn, as one of the Lords Privy Seal, February 19th 1690. A son, Daniel, was suspected of complicity in the Rye House Plot.

<sup>90</sup> Mary Knight is mentioned by both Pepys and Evelyn. She seems to have been a woman of unusual attractions and gifts, for she is mentioned by both diarists as a fine singer, was a favourite of Charles II and a friend of Orinda's as well as a pupil of Lawes. Evelyn entertained her at his house before the Restoration after which he freely expressed his disapproval of women of her kind. In Edmund Waller's 'Poems' there is a song which was sung by Mrs. Knight to the queen on her birthday.

was, like his wife, "made up of harmony", to say nothing of his other accomplishments. Here we have something more than gratitude to a beneficent patron, or any "lively anticipation of favours to come". Henry Lawes must have had a genuine appreciation for the musical gifts of a pupil who was also a friend, and there can be no question of sycophancy, for Lawes had many pupils whom he had known longer and who were more brilliant and distinguished than Lady Dering.

In her three songs, when played and sung with sympathetic understanding of their character, there is a wistful simplicity which is like a breath from the England of the Cavaliers—of Suckling and Lovelace. The glory of the madrigal was already on the wane when Mary Harvey was born, and her songs belong to the dim half-light which preceded the brilliant achievements of Henry Purcell. She was born into the "crystal, scarlet and lace-work world of Masques and Lute music" of Charles I's England, and she is a link between that world with its songs and "fancies", and the glories which were to come in the eighteenth century. Soft and shadowy though her voice may be, it should not be forgotten.

## THE SCORE—SERVANT OR MASTER?

BY PETER LATHAM

*"The modern philosopher has always been taught the lesson which he still imperfectly learns, that he must disengage himself from the influence of words."*

JOWETT, *Introduction to Plato's 'Timaeus.'*

THE reflective musician, contemplating the printed score of a new and elaborate orchestral work, may be forgiven if he turns over the pages with some complacency. To represent sound on paper, to enable a composer so to set down on the ruled page the melody he has heard with his inward ear that the executant, with the page before him, can reproduce it accurately, is one of humanity's great achievements; and the medieval scribe who first invented the rudiments of our staff-notation must have possessed the gift of creative imagination in a remarkable degree. Musing on him and on the successive generations of scribes and (later) printers, the result of whose labours he sees in the score before him, our musician may even murmur

Tax not the Publisher with vain expense,  
With ill-match'd aims the Printer who has plann'd  
(Albeit labouring for a scanty band  
Of keen score-readers only) this immense  
And glorious work of fine intelligence!

and only the ghost of Wordsworth will reproach him.

Yet as he continues his reflections, it is possible that presently he will be seized with some uneasiness. Readers of 'Erewhon' will remember how the Erewhonians, after making great advances in mechanical science, deliberately destroyed all their machinery. Invented that they might serve mankind, these engines threatened to become its masters; and it was to prevent the enslavement of the race by its own creations that the rulers of the state decreed the total abolition of machines. Is there no danger of this kind with the modern score?

I think there is. Let us step back for a moment from our score and in order to obtain a standard of comparison take a glance at an utterly different kind of music. In India they have no scores. The familiar

assertion that no system of notation exists for Indian music is not strictly accurate. There are indeed several such systems. None of them, however, gives more than a general outline of the music. Ornamentation and so on must be improvised; and owing to the peculiar nature of Indian music this involves a great deal more than, say, the ornamentation of a Rossini air by an enterprising soprano. Two musicians may interpret the same Indian piece and the result will sound to western ears like two entirely independent pieces. Add to this the fact that a very large number (probably the majority) of Indian musicians can read no notation at all, and it will be conceded that the tradition is oral, the basis of judgment exclusively aural. That hackneyed phrase, "the look of a passage", would have no meaning to an Indian musician. Such an art labours under obvious disadvantages when compared with written European music. Every piece of European music that its contemporaries have thought worth preserving has been stored away and (subject to the ravages of time) is now at the disposal of the scholar. Indian music, on the other hand, though its principles may (and do) persist, handed down by teacher to pupil through the generations, is itself ephemeral, evanescent. The melody in the composer's head is not written down. Instead he sings or plays it himself, and once performed it is forgotten save in so far as memory may fill the gap. Thus improvisation, apparently a declining art in Europe, has been carried to a very advanced stage in India, where indeed without this gift it is impossible to be a serious musician at all.

Again, the Indian's attitude towards his classics is completely different from ours. To the European student Bach and Beethoven represent a large pile of scores which he studies for his edification, endeavouring to wrench from them the secrets of musical composition, or merely to play them to the satisfaction of himself and an audience. Yet woe betide him if he can be shown to have copied a passage by Bach or Beethoven into a piece signed with his own name! This burden of the past, this fear of plagiarism hardly exists for the Indian. His classical composers are known to him by certain stories or legends; they are associated perhaps with some technical device he has been taught. Of their actual music nothing remains except such fragments as chance has handed down through the memory of a series of musicians; and regarding even these he has no means of finding out how far the current version has deviated from the original. There is no question for him of exhausting an idiom or a style, no need for that restless search for a new means of expression. It suffices that he construct his own music on a traditional basis; and it never occurs to him to worry about whether something rather similar has been composed before. Could it be proved by some miraculous means that his composition coincides note for note with that of some celebrated master of the past he would not be ashamed. He would be delighted.

Without a script symphonic music on the European scale is not possible in India. Nor has the need for it ever been felt. But the Indians' system provides scope for less ambitious combinations, and in the music that their instruments play each has a part suited to its nature and capacities. Moreover, since the ear is the sole judge, there are no "paper" effects in this music. Every note is meant to be heard—and is heard.

Few European musicians would be willing to exchange their musical heritage, their methods of music-making, with those of the Indians. But we may nevertheless envy them some of their liberty.<sup>1</sup> Certainly we could not contemplate the destruction of our treasures of the past, the scores of the great masters, without dismay; and were they to be

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of accuracy it should be mentioned that Indian music is bound by heavy chains of tradition. No civilized art is really free. But the subject is irrelevant to the present argument.



obliterated in spite of us by some undreamed-of catastrophe we should experience a sense of irrevocable loss. But should we not receive some compensation, albeit inadequate? Should we not be conscious of a new lightness, a new freedom, once the burden of the past had slipped from our shoulders? No longer would our new choral works have to stand comparison with Bach's and Handel's, our symphonies with Beethoven's, our operas with Mozart's, Wagner's or Verdi's. No longer could our teacher tell us that our style lacked originality, that Chopin, Liszt or Debussy had already said all that needed saying in that particular line. And of course, if we were lucky enough to remember a genuine bit of Chopin, Liszt or Debussy, that the rest of mankind had forgotten—well, we should just "bung it in". O Brave New World!

Again, those orchestral scores of ours—we glory in their magnificence, but must we not also admit their cumbrousness? Must we not agree that they contain a great deal that they never would have contained if the eye had not invaded a realm that does not properly belong to it, if the ear had remained in sole control? Those "paper" effects! How pretty and ingenious they look! How disappointing they sound! And what a dangerous hold they have secured throughout the whole field of modern music!<sup>2</sup>

There are substantial advantages, we must admit, in a scoreless Eden, and attractions that have sufficed to keep the oriental Adam within the garden's boundaries right up to the present day. It is the European Adam who has listened to the whisperings of the serpent Notation, with the result that he now finds himself floundering in a wilderness of paper. He cannot be blamed if he turns upon the tempter and puts him on his trial. Nor will he admit the plea that without notation a developed musical art is impossible; for Indian music bears witness to the contrary. But the score can easily find more solid arguments than this. "It is you", it can say to the prosecution, "who have, of your own free will, taken me into your service. Whether you did well to do so is not for me to judge. But at least I have proved a faithful and punctual servant." Such is the claim and it requires careful consideration. In what manner, with what accuracy and what degree of fidelity has the score served us?

To answer the first part of the question is not difficult. The score sets out to do a number of things. To begin with it contains, in their proper arrangement and order, all the notes that the composer regards as necessary for the expression of his thought—these and no others. Each note must be of the right kind (crotchet, quaver, or whatever it is) and occupy the unique place in the time-scheme that belongs to it. Next, the quality of each sound must be indicated, the instrument by which it is to be played and the method of performance (*e.g. arco* or *pizzicato*). The score must further inform us how loud each sound is to be and how quick the movement. Lastly, the notes must be grouped into bars and phrases, so that executants may grasp the rhythmical aspect of each passage.

Pitch, duration, dynamics, quality and phrasing: these are the matters on which we go to the score for information. Each will involve a separate enquiry. But since pitch and duration are the most important and will detain us rather longer than the rest, let us deal with the other three first.

#### Phrasing

I have no serious quarrel to pick with the score as regards phrasing. To be sure, a great deal of music is very badly phrased; but that is the

<sup>2</sup> Not only of modern music! The Netherlands school of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were just as bad with their ingenious canons and the like, that can be seen but seldom heard. Nor was Byrd, or even Bach, entirely guiltless.

fault of composers and editors and should not be laid at the door of the notation. I must however complain in passing that the slur is an over-worked symbol. In piano music it signifies two separate things, a true phrase-marking and a general indication for *legato*, besides being used occasionally over the notes of a spread chord to show that they belong to one entity (e.g. the last chord in Chopin's B♭ minor scherzo). In vocal music it may mark a *melisma*, a sequence of two or more notes sung to the same syllable, or it may be a direction for *portamento*. Its use to mark breathing points or phrasing is rarer, but by no means unknown. For wind instruments it marks breathing and phrasing, which normally coincide. Where the phrase is too long to be played in a single breath the slur may go with either the breathing or the phrasing—the customs of composers differ. In string music the slur nearly always indicates bowing; but not quite always, since Wagner for one is very fond of using long slurs to indicate phrasing. These long-slurred phrases therefore are left without bowing marks in the score, just as the bowed passages by other composers are left unphrased. Finally we must not forget that in all kinds of music the slur is also used to show a tied note. A singularly versatile sign! Rather too versatile indeed for that absolute precision the ideal score should possess!

#### Quality

Here again there is not very much to be said. The score tells us pretty well all we want to know when it shows that the sound in which we are interested is to be played by, say, an oboe. We may note that even this may be misleading if the music is old. With the passage of time the oboe's quality has changed considerably, so that Handel's instrument sounded coarser and louder than its modern successor. But again we must admit that the discrepancy is not one for which we can blame the score; and it is fair to say that a modern composer, writing for modern instruments, is able to indicate with precision what quality of sound he desires.<sup>3</sup>

#### Dynamics

Until a few years ago no means existed of measuring exactly the absolute intensity of a sound. Quite recently, however, a system has been evolved whereby such measurements can be made through the use of units called phons. No reference to phons has ever appeared, so far as I know, in a musical score. Nor is it desirable that it should, for the absolute volume of sound required varies with the nature of the work and even with the circumstances of performance. The *forte* of the trombone, so majestic in a large hall, becomes unbearable in a small room, and every accompanist knows that he must adjust the volume of his tone to the particular voice he is accompanying. It is apparent, therefore, that such a direction as *forte* implies a volume of sound varying according as it is applied to a full orchestra, a string quartet or a pianoforte. Furthermore a pianist will probably make his *forte* louder in a big concert hall than in a drawing-room; an operatic soprano will employ more tone than an ordinary school-girl, if both of them sing the same song. Dynamic markings are in fact purely relative. There is no absolute standard whatever.

It is clear therefore that a score cannot pretend to signify a composer's

<sup>3</sup> There are subtler aspects of quality, of which the difference between a well produced and a badly produced voice, between the singing tone of one pianist and the hard tone of another are examples. No score can indicate shades as delicate as these. Vague hints, such as *cantabile* or *espressivo*, are all that are possible and all that can be expected. The same thing applies to those rhythmic nuances that we include under *tempo rubato*. Only a human mind, with its power of constant readjustment, can measure and weigh these minute and changing values. They are beyond the scope of any notation; and accordingly I leave them outside the discussion. The subtle adjustments of pitch familiar to all who have studied the pure scale are in a different category. Conceivably they might be recorded, though not in our staff-notation.

dynamic intentions with anything like the same precision as, let us say, his phrasing. The most it can do is to supply certain general indications of a vague character. Perhaps that is why there is so little uniformity in this province between the scores of different historical periods, and even between two contemporary composers. In old music there are of course no dynamic markings at all. The whole question of loud and soft was left to the discretion of the singers, who would be guided by the shape of the phrases, the words and, in the Mass, the ritual. Possibly it was the rise of instrumental music, wherein the clue of words was lacking, that led to the introduction of dynamic signs. But if so the innovation came late and very gradually; and Mozart is the earliest of the great composers to employ such signs at all lavishly. *For*te and *piano* are scattered freely, sometimes very freely, about his scores, but *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* are rare. With Beethoven they become common, and after him composers grow more and more liberal with their dynamic markings. Tchaikovsky, never noted for his restraint, uses four *f*'s—he may use five for all I know; and he certainly uses five *p*'s. The question arises, have we to scale all his music to a standard of four (or five) *f*'s and five *p*'s? If so, his mere double *f*'s and double *p*'s will correspond roughly to Beethoven's *mf*'s and *mp*'s. Clearly this will not do. But if we believe, as we must, that in some at any rate of his *pp* passages Beethoven intended the player to play as softly as he could—as softly as Tchaikovsky with his five *p*'s<sup>4</sup>—what else are we to think? The fact is that the situation is completely chaotic; and since many of Tchaikovsky's contemporaries and successors, eschewing his excesses, have limited themselves to a mere three *f*'s and three *p*'s, the confusion has become worse confounded. It might be worth while studying each separate composer's use of *f* and *p*, if one could persuade oneself that each consistently adhered to some carefully thought-out system of his own. But frankly one can believe no such thing. Each follows his impulse, and the interpreter must fall back on his musical sense.

Another example of lack of precision frequently met with is due to the carelessness of the composer and not to any failure in the means of notation. It concerns the "hair-pins" that indicate *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. How often we meet a pair of these "hair-pins", one swelling out, the other closing in, and nothing to show the extent of the swell! If we start from and return to *pp*, are we to swell to *p*, *mp*, *f*, or what? There is nothing in the score to tell us. Perhaps still more perplexing is the series of *crescendo* "hair-pins" one sometimes meets in Schumann, three or four of them with intervals between them—and no other markings whatsoever. If we do exactly as we are told the volume of tone will rise by a series of "terraces" to *fortissimo*—a manifest distortion, more often than not, of the composer's meaning. Yet who shall blame Schumann when even the careful Beethoven is not above reproach? The long *crescendo* leading to a sudden *piano* is almost a mannerism with him. But as to how big the *crescendo* is to be he has seldom anything to tell us.

One might multiply instances of ambiguous, misleading and even ridiculous dynamic directions. What is the player of Scriabin's ninth piano Sonata to do with "Avec une douceur de plus en plus caressante et empoisonnée"? But it is already abundantly clear that scores, so beautifully lucid in other respects, are utterly casual—or worse—as regards dynamics; and that their inherent deficiencies have been increased by the carelessness and eccentricity of composers. Perhaps that is why certain otherwise conscientious artists will sometimes disregard a dynamic

<sup>4</sup> In fairness to Tchaikovsky it must be remembered that the famous *ppppp* passage at the end of the "Pathetic" Symphony is for trombones and tube—dangerous creatures with whom he was justified in taking special precautions.



direction altogether. Puccini was very fond of marking a *cantabile* melody *pp*, or even *ppp*. Yet time and again one hears the singer plough his way like a battleship through phrase after phrase at a steady, sonorous *forte*. And what about Verdi's high B $\flat$  at the end of "Celeste Aida"?

#### Pitch

Pitch, like dynamics, has its two aspects, absolute and relative. The absolute pitch of a note is determined by its frequency; so that all that is needed for the establishment of a definite standard is that everyone should agree that a given note on the stave should always represent a given frequency. In the past no such standard existed, with the result that no one can say at exactly what pitch an old piece of music should be sung. There seems to be general agreement that the Elizabethan pitch was lower than our own, but the precise extent of the lowering is unascertainable. It is safe to guess that the music in which keyed instruments played no part varied within certain narrow limits. Parties of madrigal singers or string players would trust their ears without troubling to resort to a tuning fork.

As time went on various attempts were made to standardize pitch. But these did not always agree with one another; and so it came about that during the greater part of the present century a number of different standards were in vogue. It is disconcerting to reflect that Debussy and Elgar, assuming they both had an acute sense of absolute pitch, composed their music at slightly different pitches. Finally, in 1939, a long series of negotiations led to the acceptance of a universal standard, A in the treble stave being fixed at 440 vibrations per second. Such a settlement, besides removing all ambiguity of pitch from scores composed since it was made, will be welcome to all possessors of the faculty of absolute pitch, to whom these small discrepancies have been a constant vexation; and it may possibly lead to that faculty's becoming more common in the future.

To indicate relative pitch we have our staff notation. By a historical accident this came into being at a time when music was under the sway of the ecclesiastical modes, and it is accordingly designed to accommodate the diatonic scale.<sup>8</sup> But the ecclesiastical modes proved unstable. Chromaticism crept in. Man, however, is innately conservative, and even when he makes changes he likes to pretend that nothing has happened. Thus, though signs were invented (first the  $\flat$  and then the  $\sharp$ ) to represent the chromatic lowering or raising of a note, they were used very sparingly to begin with; and singers were expected to judge for themselves when a note should be sharpened or flattened. Eventually, with the increasing chromaticism of the madrigalists and their contemporaries this system of *musica ficta* gradually broke down. Accidentals began to find their way into the score, and flats (though not at first sharps) into the key signature. Without this development men like Thomas Weelkes or Carlo Gesualdo could hardly have put the music they conceived on to paper at all.

This dependence of the human mind on symbols is a commonplace of psychology. A certain limited apprehension of the world about us we may indeed achieve without symbolism; but the moment we plunge into a train of thought involving a series of logical steps we are bound to fall back on symbols. A writer or a philosopher without words, a musician without notes, a mathematician without figures, all are helpless. Perhaps the musician is rather less helpless than the others, for his musical memory is able to deal directly with the raw material of his art, the sounds them-

<sup>8</sup> Had the stave not been invented till our own times it is reasonable to suppose that it would have been adapted to the chromatic scale—a line or a space for each semitone in the octave. No doubt some means would have been found to distinguish between F $\sharp$  and G $\flat$ .

selves. A man without any knowledge of notation is perfectly able to recall a melody. He may even, by the exercise of the same faculty of memory, be able to invent one. The limits to this kind of thing are, however, fairly narrow; and it is probably safe to say that no one can think his way through a series of elaborate polyphonic progressions without recourse to symbols.<sup>6</sup> Further, the more unusual and original the progressions, the more the composer will need symbols to fix his thought, which is always in danger of becoming indefinite and losing itself.

Now in the time of Weelkes or Gesualdo the general tendency towards chromaticism had reached, as we have seen, a point where *musica ficta* was breaking down. The # and ♭ signs had been taken from the limbo where they had been lying, and were giving the newest scores an unwonted appearance. Is it not likely that the eye whispered secrets to the ear, that the mere sight of these pretty new toys first urged composers to more and more recondite experiments with chromatics, and then provided the means by which such experiments could be carried far beyond any limits previously conceived? But if the accidental signs did this, then they show themselves to have been something more than useful tools and begin to assume some of those active, independent, unpredictable characteristics that so alarmed the Erewhonians in their machines.

The story, however, does not end there. Not content with unlocking gates for the composer, with opening the way to new lands, notation has further presumed to prescribe the road that he shall travel, by blocking alternative routes. Ever since the end of the sixteenth century the # and ♭ signs—together with those others, the ♮, X and ♯♭, which were essential to complete the system and came into use as time went on—have been among the principal means by which progress has been made. They have led us to the major-minor key scheme, to modulation, to the discovery and use of extreme keys (and hence to equal temperament), to the game of enharmonic hide-and-seek from flat to sharp keys and back again, and finally, in our own day, to polytonality and free chromaticism. But there is one promising field to the exploitation of which they have given us no help whatever: the use, I mean, of fractions of a tone other than the semitone. Considering the advances that have been made in this direction by pretty well all the oriental musical systems—though these have developed far more slowly than ours—it is rather remarkable that thirds and quarters of tones should have been shunned by all but the most wayward of our composers; and that even these should have shown no more than a fitful, intermittent interest. I am aware that the subject is hedged round with difficulties, both theoretic and practical. Yet it seems to me that in other directions musicians have overcome more formidable difficulties during the last three hundred years. No doubt Palestrina would have been shocked had he been shown a piece containing quarter-tones. But I fancy he would have been more shocked by music written in several simultaneous keys and perhaps most of all by a passage in which the note D, with a X sign against it, approached in a very sharp key, was quitted as E♭ in a flatter one.

If we have not got very far in our experiments with quarter-tones and the like, the overriding difficulty has been, I suggest, notation, or rather the lack of it. It is not merely that this deficiency imposes a serious obstacle in the way of writing, publishing or performing such music, though that would be serious enough. The crux of the problem lies in the composer's mind. Regarding these intervals composers are in the same position as they were regarding chromatic semitones and elaborate

<sup>6</sup> Whether a man thinks on paper or in his head is irrelevant. In both cases he will be thinking in terms of symbols.

modulation in the days of *musica ficta*. With no symbols to lean on they feel that they cannot deal with the subject, cannot pursue it to a useful conclusion. Out of sight, out of mind, in fact. And so they have turned in other directions, where this difficulty at least does not confront them. It begins to appear that  $\sharp$ 's and  $\flat$ 's have put blinkers on us, driven us down the road of their choice and hardly permitted us a glimpse of what lies over the hedge. We for our part have been docile. We have had no idea of what was being done to us, and the carrots successively dangled in front of us have been quite succulent.

#### Duration

Except for the metronome (to which I shall be returning in a moment) there is no precise means of defining the absolute duration of a sound. Its time-value (minim, crotchet or what not) establishes its length relatively to the other sounds in the piece; but for the general pulse of the music, from which all relative time-values are derived, we have to fall back on *presto*, *allegretto*, *adagio*, or whatever other vague indication the composer may have written. These familiar speed directions are even more indefinite than the dynamic markings we have already considered. Some of them, *maestoso* and *mesto*, for instance, are not primarily adverbs of movement at all, and many are as much concerned with mood as with tempo. A few (e.g. *tempo di marcia*, *tempo di valse*) have their speed to some extent<sup>1</sup> settled for them by the body movements with which they are associated. But the vast majority have no established association with any settled pulse value; and it would not be easy to arrange even the most familiar of them in order of speed. *Presto* is faster than *allegro*. Yes, but what about *allegro molto*? How would you grade *lento*, *largo*, *grave*, *adagio*? Musicians have not even decided whether *andantino* is faster or slower than *andante*. Yet the word is still used, and the wretched executant pays his money and takes his choice. Directions in languages other than Italian contribute their quota to this realistic representation of chaos. A French *lent* is generally (but not always) faster than a German *langsam*—possibly because French speech is quicker and lighter than German.

I shall be told that there is a perfectly good answer to all this. *Allegro*, *presto* and the rest are no more than gentle hints regarding the character of a piece; its proper speed will settle itself when the executant comes to study it. Different executants will select slightly different tempos, no doubt, and the tempo of the same executant may vary a little according to his mood. But such variations are small; and it is highly desirable that this limited flexibility should be preserved. The executant has the task of interpreting the composer's thought through his own personality. If he is too rigidly tied he ceases to be an artist and becomes an automaton.

The same argument, we may notice in passing, can be applied to dynamics, and it has a good deal of validity. But if we admit it—as in some degree we must—we must also admit its logical consequence: that a score absolutely and perfectly precise would be a bad score, since it would not allow room for the expression of the interpreter's personality. Actually, however, our most elaborate scores fall a long way short of absolute precision. However careful the composer, he always seems to leave plenty of room for the interpreter; too much indeed if we are to judge by some interpreters and their critics. All of us have had at some time the uncomfortable experience of listening to a performance wherein the tempo seemed to us not merely different from the one we should have selected but definitely wrong. Quite a small discrepancy is sufficient to produce this discomfort in certain types of music. But it need not

<sup>1</sup> "To some extent" only! Waltzes vary in pace; and what an enormous variety of speeds is covered by the term *tempo di minuetto*!



always be small, and sometimes it is startlingly big. To imagine that such a term as *allegro* at the head of any given piece of music is bound to produce even approximately the same reactions in any two musical minds is a sheer illusion. One may take the work at twice the speed of the other. Yet both may be sincere and intelligent artists, and both may honestly believe they are right.

To prove that this is no exaggeration perhaps I may be permitted to cite an instance. The scherzo of Beethoven's ninth Symphony is in three-four time, with the direction *molto vivace* and a metronome marking of 116 to the dotted minim. With the arrival of the trio comes a change to a rhythm of two minims to the bar and a speed of *presto*. Careful, as he thought, to set the tempo of the new section beyond doubt, Beethoven wrote a new metronome marking. The figure is still 116; the note—a white note. But what white note is unfortunately not clear in the first edition. It may be a semibreve or it may be a minim. Here plainly is a dilemma. We have to choose between two speeds, one of which is exactly twice the other. Every other possibility is ruled out. Surely, if there is anything in the argument that the right tempo for a piece emerges from a study of the score, no musician will hesitate here. Yet up to the time when Stanford wrote an article<sup>6</sup> about it—after the last war—the united wits, instinct, taste of musical Europe had been unable to resolve the difficulty. Something definite may have emerged since; but if so I have not heard of it.

Scholars and interpreters, however, can scarcely be blamed for failing to fathom Beethoven's intentions when composers are unable to make up their own minds about their own music. In the April number of 'The Musical Times' appears a review of a recent recording of 'Belshazzar's Feast', conducted by the composer, William Walton. "What", says the reviewer in one place, "can be said of a composer who marks a tricky passage at 84 and then takes it at over 120?" What indeed, except that Mr. Walton has changed his mind? The metronome can indicate with great exactness the speed that a composer demands for his music. But nothing is much good when the composer's own views fluctuate. It appears that in this matter of tempo the musical mind functions much less precisely, much more capriciously than in any other musical activity; and until philosophers have explained the phenomenon and psychologists have found a cure it is futile to complain about the vagueness of the score. One of the most baffling aspects of the problem is that while some music lacks any strong intrinsic suggestion of tempo and will accordingly bear any of a wide range of different speeds, other pieces (and these not always of the more obviously rhythmic kind) permit no such doubts. For the first sort the metronome is useless or misleading unless the composer is quite sure what he wants. For the second sort it is unnecessary.

With this unsatisfactory state of affairs prevailing in the realm of absolute duration it is a relief to turn to relative duration and to find that here at least the modern score lives up to its impressive appearance. A composer writes a semibreve, a dotted crotchet, or whatever it may be, at a certain place in the bar, preceding and following it with the appropriate notes or rests; and we know exactly when that note should be sounded with reference to the rest of the music, and how long it should last. Such precision was not obtained all at once. It took a considerable time for the symbols of the medieval plainsong melody (which had at

<sup>6</sup> I regret that, owing to war-time difficulties, I have not had an opportunity to trace Stanford's article: I have a suspicion that it appeared in an early number of 'Music & Letters', but I am not sure.—It did not. See Charles Villiers Stanford, 'Interludes' (John Murray, London, 1922).—Ed.

first no exact durational significance, but partook of the freedom of speech-rhythms<sup>8</sup>) to develop under the influence of counterpoint into the exact semibreves, minims and crotchets of Palestrina. One feature of that development which is bound to strike every student is the gradual shortening of the pulse-unit from the long or short of the early measured music to the semibreve or minim of Palestrina and the crotchet of the English madrigalists. The shortening of the pulse involved, naturally, a corresponding shortening of passing notes; and when, with the increasing preoccupation with instrumental effects, the pulse came to be divided into ever more minute sections the very short notes to which we are accustomed followed as a matter of course. The English Tudor composers who used quavers in their madrigals were lavish with semi-quavers and even demi-semiquavers in their instrumental pieces. Having been trained to accept the minim or the crotchet as the normal unit for the pulse, they were compelled to use these much smaller divisions to notate those rapid passages they found so effective. To-day we have lost their prejudice about the beat, which in a modern work may be represented by anything from a dotted minim to a semiquaver. But the habit of using quavers or shorter notes for quick-moving passages has one great advantage: the custom of grouping a series of such notes by joining their tails provides an admirably clear means of showing their rhythmic disposition—as almost any instrumental page of Bach or Chopin will prove; and perhaps that is why it has survived.

The rise of instrumental music, however, brought changes far more important than the introduction of short notes. One of the biggest was the supersession of the rhythmic system based on speech, which the polyphonic school had evolved, by an altogether new system based on body-rhythms. Divorced from words music abandoned those intricate, supple rhythms of which words were at once the inspiration and the clue, and adopted in their place the simpler rhythms of the dance, whose characteristic feature is the recurrence of a strong accent at regular intervals. A by-product of this change was the conversion to new uses of an already existing symbol, the bar-line.

Originally the bar-line was not a rhythmical sign at all. It was simply a line drawn through the score of a polyphonic composition at irregular intervals as an aid to the eye, showing in a complex passage exactly which notes should be sounded simultaneously with which. But with the increasing importance of body-rhythms it came gradually to assume the function it fulfils to-day, of marking the accent and thereby dividing the music into a series of neat little rhythmical sections equal in length. So long as simple, unvarying cycles of two, three or four in a bar sufficed, as they did for fully two hundred years, for the rhythmical expression of everything the instrumental composer wished to say, all was well. But as the nineteenth century advanced composers began to feel uneasy in this rhythmical strait-jacket and to strain after a greater freedom. Experiments with bars of five or seven beats are interesting in this connection; though they cannot be regarded as more than symptomatic, since all that they do is to alter the cut of the imprisoning garment. Much more significant are such things as the slow-moving, expressive instrumental passages in Wagner (of which the famous one for violins alone at the beginning of the third scene of the third act of 'Siegfried' is a good example), wherein, although the bar-lines remain and each bar has its proper quota of beats, the melody is evidently aspiring to the freer conditions of speech-rhythm.

<sup>8</sup> The term "speech-rhythm" and its antithesis, "body-rhythm", we owe, I believe, to Sir Donald Tovey.

But it was not till the present century that composers became fully awake to the fact that the bar-line, once a useful servant, had grown into a gaoler, fettering their imagination and forbidding it access to many attractive fields of rhythmic experiment. Nor even now do they find it easy to shake off the habits of three hundred years. As an example of the efforts being made in this direction and the impediments presented by notation I take, almost at random, the last movement of Ireland's piano sonata, composed in 1920.

The piece opens with a march-like tune that swings along on a sturdy crotchet rhythm. It is perfectly straightforward. No one could possibly mistake the shape of the phrases, the points of climax. Its only irregularity lies in the fact that the accents, though they sound perfectly natural, fall at irregular intervals instead of on every fourth crotchet. This would not have worried an Elizabethan in the least. The sort of time-signature to which he was accustomed would inform him that the pulse-unit was a crotchet, and he would note that this pulse was established beyond a peradventure by the music itself. Bar-lines he might expect to see—they would help his eye, but it would not cross his mind that bar-lines indicated accents or that all bars ought to be of equal length. Not so the modern performer! He has been brought up among simple body-rhythms, trained to look for the accent on the first beat of the bar. If a composer has been so indiscreet as to place his accents at irregular intervals he must make that clear by using bars of different lengths. But that is a most unconventional thing to do, and the performer expects full warning of such abnormality in the shape of a new time-signature before every bar that differs in length from its predecessor. In order therefore to notate something less than two pages of music in a rhythm so straightforward that it almost plays itself Ireland has to write thirteen changes of time-signature in twenty-one bars. It is not easy, we perceive, to unseat the Old Man of the Sea when he has been on your shoulders for three centuries. But it has become very desirable.

One might have expected that in the transition from speech-rhythms to body-rhythms that coincided with the rise of instrumental music musicians would have realized that song, by virtue of its association with words, belonged to a category of its own and could not transfer its allegiance to the new rhythmic principles. These had risen to popularity precisely because the absence of words had made it necessary to fall back on some means of rhythmic construction independent of literary associations. In vocal music the words remained, and so there was no reason for making any change at all. But what is so apparent in the twentieth century was not at all obvious in the early seventeenth. New paths were opening, and the vocal composer hurried down them with the rest, never stopping to ask himself, "Is your journey really necessary?" And so body-rhythms, with the tyrannous bar-line as their drill-sergeant, usurped in the realm of song that place which belonged of right to the varied, flexible rhythms of speech.

But musicians have never been altogether comfortable about it. Those endowed with literary sensitiveness have always been aware that words have rhythms of their own and cannot be forced without artistic violence into patterns that are really instrumental; and from time to time they have exercised remarkable ingenuity in attempting to reconcile the demands of two rhythmic systems that are, I believe, ultimately incompatible. Occasionally the genius of a Purcell or a Bach may persuade us against all logic that such a reconciliation is possible. But these are the exceptions. Against them is set the vast bulk of vocal music that bears witness to the havoc wrought by body-rhythm and the bar-line.



Even Schubert is not always able to satisfy the claims of both rhythmical types; and one is tempted to think that he sometimes heaves a sigh of relief when he comes across a poem that he can set in the simple *Volkstied* style, consigning speech-rhythm to perdition.<sup>10</sup> Wolf was made of sterner stuff. Convinced that a reconciliation was artistically essential he worked at his songs till it was achieved. No one will dispute his sincerity, his sensibility or his genius; but with all their beauty, all their profound insight, his songs lack the inevitability, the effortless lyric flow of such songs as Dowland's, written before the modern conception of the bar-line's functions had upset the rhythms of the golden age of song. The fault does not lie in Wolf's imagination or execution; and if he has failed it is not likely that anyone else, using the same method of approach, will succeed. But a different approach is possible. What would have happened, one wonders, had it occurred to Wolf to revolt against the tyranny of the bar-line?

Such a revolt is in the air to-day. Vaughan Williams reverts to the rhythmic flexibility of the Elizabethan polyphonists. Holst casts even further back: the prelude to 'The Hymn of Jesus' is based on a plainsong tune played (or sung) in plainsong rhythm—a bold experiment in a work for chorus and orchestra, which the conductor must somehow keep together. But it is really unnecessary to refer to particular examples when contemporary music is everywhere full of this striving after more rhythmic freedom. Even with the music of a more or less distant past to guide us the struggle is not proving easy. Habits die hard, and the eye is at least as conservative as the ear. Every musician knows that in Tudor music a bar-line does not signify an accent. Yet put him to sing a madrigal for the first time, and, such is the force of habit and early training, it will cost him intense and sustained mental effort if he is to resist the false impulse that every bar-line will suggest to him.

It is now time to review the results of our survey and summarize our conclusions. To begin with we have found that whatever question we ask the score, its answer falls short of absolute completeness. That is natural in view of the imperfection of all human expression; and it is not to be deplored, since it compels the composer, whether he likes it or not, to leave room for the interpreter's individuality, an essential ingredient in a live performance. Next, it has emerged that in some departments, notably dynamics and tempo, this lack of precision is much greater than in others, so great sometimes as to leave the door open to serious misinterpretation; and we have noticed that these are the very departments in which the ideas of musicians are themselves most indefinite. A musician may have a perfectly clear notion of the melody, harmony and rhythm of a passage; yet he may change his mind again and again regarding its tempo; and he may disregard entirely the admittedly vague dynamic markings in the score. The obvious explanation is that inexactness of notation is the consequence of inexact thinking. Without denying this we may put forward the counter-proposition that the musician thinks inexactly because no convenient means exist for expressing exact thought concerning these matters.<sup>11</sup> We all know that

<sup>10</sup> It is not only musicians who have felt the influence of body-rhythms. Poets too have submitted to the attraction, and lyrics abound for which a regularly barred musical setting is perfectly suitable. Schubert puts "Hark, hark! the lark" to the music of a *Ländler*. We may say what we like about the anachronism, but the poem really does have that sort of lilt about it. The author of Schubert's German version realized how much of the song's charm lies in that lilt and preserved it in his translation, with the happy result that the music fits the original English as well as the German. But special pleading of this sort cannot alter the fact that the first allegiance of all poetry, the only allegiance of most of it, and of all prose, is to the rhythms of speech.

<sup>11</sup> I must admit that the metronome does provide a means of thinking exactly about tempo, but although composers use metronome numbers freely in their tempo markings, I doubt if many of them are really metronome-minded. They have not got the feel of those rather depressing numbers into their bones.

if we want to clarify our thought on any subject one of the best methods is to set it out on paper. Any uncertainty or vagueness is shown up at once by the written word. But if, through an inadequacy of the vocabulary, no words exist that will perfectly express our idea, then the odds are that full clarity of thought will not be attained. Such is the power of the word; and such, by an obvious extension, the power of the musical symbol.

That this may be a true diagnosis of the observed facts appears more likely when we consider the development of chromaticism or the history of the bar-line. Here it would seem that the musical mind, seeking adventure and pursuing, naturally, the line of least resistance, has actually been guided in certain directions to the exclusion of others by the existence of notational facilities. The pioneer would of course be quite unaware that a # or a bar-line was leading him by the nose; but because #'s or bar-lines offered him something definite to play with he would concentrate his experiments on them to the neglect of such things as thirds of tones and speech-rhythms, which lack symbols to represent them. No one who has studied the influence of language on thought will be in the least surprised to find a similar phenomenon in music. All we can do is to recognize the situation and accept the fact that the roads we follow are not altogether of our own choosing, saving our dignity with the reflection that at least we travel voluntarily along them, deriving both interest and profit from the journey. Once we have realized the forces controlling us for what they are they lose their compelling power and we are free to take counsel with our true leader, who is not the eye but the ear, not the symbol but the sound. This is well, for the symbol that springs so disconcertingly to life is only a Frankenstein monster. Animated by necromancy, devoid of true vitality, it lacks both imagination and foresight. As a guide it is unreliable as a will-o'-the-wisp; and the dance it leads us is not always along the true road to progress.

## LACHRYMAE: A STUDY OF DOWLAND

BY ROSEMARY J. MANNING

To the student of John Dowland two outstanding characteristics present themselves after no more than a casual glance through his works. First, in an age of great religious exuberance, the age of Tallis, Tye and Byrd, he wrote no church music whatever, save a few psalm settings. Second, his music is deeply imbued with melancholy, the one consistently sombre tone in a chorus of usually robust and cheerful voices. It is in an attempt to discover the reason for this that the following essay has been written. No claim can be made that its estimate of Dowland's character is the correct one. So little is known of him that we can never do more than draw our own conclusions; but this we surely have a right to do, however controversial they may prove.

Little is known of Dowland's life beyond the barest facts. He was born in 1563 and after extensive travels on the Continent became chief lutenist to the King of Denmark, which post he held from 1598 to 1606. He lost it through financial carelessness, and on his return to England seems to have lived in obscurity till 1612, when he is heard of again, first as lutenist to Lord Walden and then as one of the King's Musicians for the Lutes. He died in 1626, but his burial-place is unknown. He was married, but we know nothing about his domestic life; he appears to

have been converted to Roman Catholicism in about 1580, yet his works contain no hint either of religious conflict or of religious fervour. We do not know with any certainty what friends he had. The only name which occurs more than once among the poems he set is that of Fulke Greville, a significant choice of which more hereafter. But this need not indicate a friendship or even an acquaintance with this dour poet. Dowland is mentioned frequently, especially in the earlier part of his life, by his contemporaries, and in the warmest terms of praise, yet hardly with affection; and at the end of his life even the spring of praise dried up. In 1612, the year which saw the publication of his last and greatest book of songs, the voice of a lonely champion is heard mourning that Dowland is a nightingale, forlorn and neglected in the cold of winter:

So since (old frend) thy yeares have made thee white,  
And thou, for others, hath consum'd thy spring,  
How few regard thee whome thou didst delight,  
And farre, and neere, came once to hear thee sing:  
Ingratefull times, and worthles age of ours,  
That lets us pine, when it hath cropt our flowers.

I think it may be assumed that one of the reasons for Dowland's decline in popularity was his failing vocal powers. References of the time indicate that he was admired almost more as a singer and lutenist than as a composer. Certainly it is possible that no one but he could do his own songs justice. Dowland himself, with the assertiveness of the essentially shy and unselfconfident, always makes the most of his fame. In the preface to the 'First Book of Ayres' he quotes, in support of the "favour and estimation" he had abroad, a letter addressed to him by Luca Marenzio, part of which reads: ". . . for your infinite excellence and merit deserve the admiration and homage of myself and everyone; and in closing I kiss your hands", a polite though artificial tribute. But his last book, 'The Pilgrime's Solace' (1612), makes a plaintive reference to his early fame, and talks bitterly of the "strange entertainment" he found in the "two sorts of people that shroude themselves under the title of Musicians", the singers ("merely ignorant") who find him old-fashioned, and "the professors of the Lute".

But how little these writers help us in any estimation of Dowland. It was more than the waters of the North Sea that severed him from his contemporaries. Since so little can be gained from others, let us leave this preliminary survey for the man's works, and first for a study of the words. Dowland, apart from psalm tunes in various collections, including the beautiful 1599 Psalter of Richard Allison, and his lute music, which will be treated separately, wrote four collections of songs. Of the eighty-odd songs he published barely a score could be called really cheerful. Where did he find the words? On this point I am unable to find myself in agreement with Peter Warlock, who says (in 'The English Ayre') that there is absolutely no evidence to show that Dowland wrote his own verses. Perhaps, but there is equally no evidence to show that he did not. Why did he trouble to acknowledge the authorship of some of the poems? It is notable that many of those so acknowledged are the more cheerful songs. Where, among the Daphnes and Chloes of Elizabethan lyric did he find such an astonishing collection of serious, melancholic verse? He must have combed the verse books of his time, and he certainly obtained a remarkable uniformity of style. For myself, I feel fairly certain that he wrote the words himself, or at least a large proportion of them. That he was a poet we know from his translation of Micrologus, and from various verses in the musical collections, sonnets in honour of brother-artists and so forth. He evidently held definite



views on the choice of words—views which many later musicians might have heeded to their advantage, for in the 'First Book of Ayres' he refers, in a dedicatory letter, to music "expressing some worthy sentence, or excellent Poeme". It was not uncommon for a musician in Elizabethan times to be a poet too. Allison, Cooper, Edwardes, Campian, to mention only a few, wrote their own words. Weelkes, indeed, lamented that his gift for music "is alone in mee, and without the assistance of other more confident sciences".

As stated before, the only poet whose name appears more than once in Dowland's song-books is that of Fulke Greville. There are settings of three of his poems. Eight other poets, including Campian, Peele and Donne, are represented by one poem each. Though the Greville poems are not among his best, it was an interesting choice. Dowland's mood must have chimed in well with that of the author of 'O wearisome condition of humanity!' But the song-books are no 'Astrophel and Stella', and one looks in vain for evidence of Dowland's actual life-story. Perhaps No. 6 in the last book may be autobiographical:

Now, O now, I needs must part,  
Parting though I absent mourn.  
Absence can no joy impart,  
Joy once fled cannot return.  
While I live I needs must love;  
Love lives not when Hope is gone.  
Now, at last Despair doth prove  
Love divided loveth none.

Sad despair doth drive me hence;  
This despair unkindness sends.  
If that parting be offence,  
It is she that then offends.

This may possibly refer to his leaving England for the court of Denmark, but I am inclined to think that even this is straining a point.

Compare the style of these poems:

In darkness let me dwell, the ground shall sorrow be;  
The roof despair to bar all cheerful light from me.

Go nightly cares, the enemy to rest,  
Forbear awhile to vex my troubled sprite.

From silent night, true register of moans,  
From saddest soul consumed with deepest sins,  
From heart quite rent with sighs and heavy groans,  
My wailing Muse her woeful work begins.

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs;  
Exil'd forever let me mourn  
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings  
There let me live forlorn.

There is a striking similarity in them, and these are only four among a number of others. The words are, on the whole, of a high standard, and several are worthy to stand beside the best of Elizabethan lyrics. An outstanding example is this:

Weep you no more, sad fountains,  
What need you flow so fast?  
Look how the snowy mountains  
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.  
But my sun's heavenly eyes  
View not your weeping,  
That now lies sleeping,  
Softly now lies sleeping,  
Softly, softly now,  
Softly lies sleeping.

Another poem, No. 1 in the 'First Book', has a certain interest, for the language of it, its seventeenth-century, slightly Donneish flavour would seem to suggest that Dowland was as modern in his poetical tastes as he was original and daring in his musical genius:

Unquiet thoughts, your civil slaughter stint  
 And wrap your wrongs within a pensive heart;  
 And you, my tongue, that makes my mouth a mint,  
 And stamps my thoughts to coin them words by art,  
 Be still, for if you ever do the like  
 I'll cut the string that makes the hammer strike.

We cannot take the words of Dowland's poems too literally. This may seem an obvious statement, but the would-be interpreter of a rather obscure mind can easily fall into the trap of reading over-much into that mind's artistic expressions. But if the words themselves tell us few facts of his life, we are surely entitled to infer from them something about his character and mentality. It is not unreasonable to suppose that a man who wrote almost nothing but love songs, and the majority of those of an unhappy nature, suffered at some period, possibly for a lasting period, from the pains of unrequited love. A large number of the poems are variations on the theme:

Farewell, too fair, too chaste, but too, too cruel,  
 Haste, restless sighs, and let your burning breath  
 Dissolve the ice of her indurate heart,  
 Me, me, and none but me, dart home, O gentle Death.

A man could not continue writing settings for such words, and settings of such sincerity and power, if he had never suffered the pains of which he writes. Again, I have no wish to over-emphasize the autobiographical note in his songs. It is too easy an explanation of Dowland's melancholy to ascribe the character of his music only to disappointed love. Others have suffered as much and more. Shakespeare, from the little we know of him, was not happy in love; Beethoven's sufferings were as bitter as any man's; yet neither of these relapsed into melancholy. Sorrow is a state which can envelop a man till he is soaked in it, or it can act as a stimulus: the spirit recognizes its adversary, fights it and emerges battered but the stronger for the ordeal. Such men as Beethoven and Shakespeare escaped from the slough of melancholy by hurling themselves into their work with an energy that carried them far beyond their contemporaries. Both were men of their age. The weapons were ready to their hand, for Shakespeare the play, for Beethoven the symphony and quartet. With these weapons they produced greater works than their contemporaries or successors, and defeated their own mental adversaries. But, though they may stand out from their times, they are still the children of their age, and can have felt none of the bitter frustration of the man who knows himself to be born out of his time. Dowland's presumed unhappiness was more than the tragedy of circumstances; it was the tragedy of the out-of-place.

Let us take a look at Dowland's contemporaries and brother-musicians, most of them true Elizabethans, who, whatever their private joys and sorrows, felt at one with their vital world. It was an age of violent progress; slow returns, maybe, from the gilt-edged new world, but large profits. The ebullient vigour of the rising merchant classes was manifested in the piracy of Drake and Hawkins, the rivalry with Spain and the colonizing exploits of Raleigh. The artists shared in the exuberance of the times. In music, in the theatre, England led Europe with a brilliant galaxy of names. Now Dowland was himself acclaimed both by Europe and his own country, but that does not make him any more a

representative Elizabethan. It must be noted that his fame did not last, and that the "ayre", which may surely be reckoned as his creation, did not really catch on. It began with Dowland's 'First Book' in 1597, and his 'Pilgrime's Solace' in 1612 brought the vogue of the ayre to an end, with the exception of Attey's collection ten years later. Dowland's art was entirely individual, and died with him. It cannot even be said that he influenced his contemporaries particularly, for the other ayre composers, Campian, Rosseter, Jones, Ford, Corkine and the rest wrote a very different type of song, far less personal and, musically, less interesting. Danyel is the only writer who can compare with Dowland, whom, in some respects, he much resembles. Popular as Dowland had been in his early years (his 'First Book of Ayres' ran through five editions) he was too strong meat for the cheerful Elizabethans. The younger school of lutenists, with their sanguine ditties of Phillis and Celia, their Cupids and Daphnes, were more to the taste of the early seventeenth century. The attitude of Rosseter and Campian, Dowland's great rivals, can be seen in their joint 'Book of Ayres', published in 1601, in which appear the words: "Ayres, like epigrams, should be short, and in this volume their shortness is atoned for by their large number. Most of them are light love lyrics, 'care-pleasing rimes without Arte'". No one could describe Dowland's songs as "care-pleasing rimes without Arte". That Dowland felt his isolation is shown by the Epistle to the Reader in his 'Third Book of Ayres', published in 1603. It is worth quoting in full:

The applause of them that judge, is the encouragement of those that write. My first two bookes of aires speed so well that they have produced a third, which they have fetcht far from home, and brought even through the most perilous seas, where having escapt so many sharpe rocks, I hope they shall not be wrackt on land by curious and biting censures. As in a hive of bees al labour alike to lay up honny opposing themselves against none but fruitless drones; so in the house of learning and fame, all good indeavourers should strive to ad somewhat that is good, not malicing one another, but altogether bandying against the idle and malicious ignorant. My labours for my part I freely offer to everie mans judgement and presuming, that favour once attained, is more easily encreased then lost.

Perhaps one of the most interesting and remarkable facts of Dowland's life is that in an age of great religious fervour he found no inspiration in this sphere for his genius. He wrote no religious music whatever, save the psalm settings and harmonizations of his early career. The four extremely interesting songs in 'A Pilgrime's Solace' ('In this trembling shadow cast', 'If that a sinner's sighs', 'Thou mighty God' and 'Where sin sore wounding') are not religious music in the ordinary sense and will be considered separately. As we have said, he became a Roman Catholic when he was still a young man, and some have ascribed to this his failure to obtain a post in England. But it proved no obstacle to William Byrd. In this connection a letter written by Dowland to Sir Robert Cecil is of great value. In it the composer tells of his earlier travels in France in the retinue of Elizabeth's ambassador, Sir Henry Cobham. He was apparently converted to Roman Catholicism by some English refugees of that persuasion. He then, he says, on his return, sought the place of a deceased Mr. Johnson, but "found myself like to go without it". He soon "guessed that my religion was my hindrance". Fearing possible persecution, he managed, through the good offices of Essex and Sir Robert Cecil, to leave England, and after travelling in Germany, reached Italy. Here he met one Skidmore, to whom he confided his troubles, saying that the queen had spoken of him as "an obstinate Papist". Whereupon the wily Skidmore replied: "Mr. Dowland, if it be not so, make her words true". Dowland became involved with the Roman Catholic English faction, but he had



no taste for politics or intrigue, and did his best to preserve his loyalty to Elizabeth and his country. However, the strain told upon him, "whereupon I have reformed myself to live according to her Majesty's laws". The whole letter is written in an anxious, ingenuous and rather pathetically garrulous manner, with many protestations of loyalty and a most unworldly and un-Elizabethan horror at the machinations of the English Jesuits and their hangers-on. Nothing can be less likely than that the shrewd Elizabeth could ever have imagined Dowland to be a dangerous man to have in England. That he did not obtain favour from the queen is far more likely to be due to the fact that he sought it only half-heartedly and without the necessary accompaniment of flattery. It is an interesting point that Dowland was the only notable composer who did not contribute to the fulsome Oriana collection of madrigals, produced when the queen was sixty-eight years of age. Each madrigal ends "Long live fair Oriana", and almost every composer of the time contributed to the collection. Dowland, of course, was not a madrigal composer, but neither was Robert Jones, who wrote a contribution. It was probably inclination that was lacking.

In this Dowland can, I think, be compared with Sir Philip Sidney in some ways. This pattern of an English gentleman is too often held up as a typical Elizabethan. I have even seen him referred to as a "favourite of Queen Elizabeth". This latter statement is as untrue as the former one is misleading. Sidney obtained no favours from Elizabeth. The queen once explained to Essex, in a letter commending the infamous Rathlin episode, that she had little use for men who were "a prey unto delicacy". Sidney was absorbed in his personal problems and his religious enthusiasm for the Protestant League, and Elizabeth and her ministers had little use for men whose enthusiasms were unlikely to benefit the ruling caucus. Sidney found himself cold-shouldered, as his father, one of the few conscientious governors of Ireland, had been before him. He wanders through the Elizabethan scene a faintly puzzled misfit and passes out of it with an heroic gesture which has magnified one aspect of his personality out of all proportion. Like Dowland, Sidney became a prey to melancholy. He wrote to his great friend, Languet: "and the use of the pen, as you may perceive, has plainly fallen from me; and my mind is now beginning, by reason of my indolent ease, imperceptibly to lose its strength and to relax without any reluctance". Still more significantly he wrote: "For to what purpose should our thoughts be directed to various kinds of knowledge, unless room be afforded for putting it into practice, so that public advantage may be the result, which in a corrupt age we cannot hope for". Dowland too seems to have recognized clearly his own unsuitability for Elizabethan life. With his early reputation it is surely foolish to suppose that he could not have obtained a post at home. If he obtained one in his old age (under Lord Walden), he could certainly have done so in his early prime. It cannot have been all a matter of chance that he spent the best years of his life at the court of Elsinore.

How is this theory borne out by Dowland's music? Surely by the original form it took and by the personal character of the music itself. Dowland was one of the great pioneers of music, and yet it was, in some ways, an odd moment for a pioneer to arise. The madrigal vein was by no means exhausted, the instrumental mine only worked on the surface, as it were; yet he was uninterested in either. He made no contribution to the keyboard music of his time and he wrote no madrigals. This latter fact is more interesting when we remember that he spent some time of his youth abroad, in Italy, the home of the madrigal. In the Address to

the Courteous Reader, in the 'First Book of Ayres', he writes of Marenzio and quotes a letter he received from this eminent madrigalist, yet he was not sufficiently influenced by the Italian school to make even a small contribution to this great musical form. If Italy did influence him at all, it may have been in the sphere of the solo song, for the Florentines were experimenting with this form of music and Dowland may well have heard some of their work when he was travelling in Italy. In this connection it is interesting to find that 'A Muscally Banquet', the collection compiled by Robert Dowland, contained two contributions by Caccini.

Although this essay is not intended as a detailed criticism of the songs themselves, it is impossible to leave them without some words on their general musical characteristics, and more especially on the qualities of them which mark them out as so essentially Dowland's. The 'First Book' is the least interesting, musically, but it was, after all, Dowland's first essay in an art not only unfamiliar to himself, but to the entire musical world. He was experimenting, feeling his way, and if this book appears to us now to suffer by comparison with the later ones, it is none the less a remarkable achievement. As Warlock says, none of Dowland's songs falls below a high standard. Generally speaking, the 'First Book' is not so serious, nor so personal in tone, as the later ones. It contains, however, two perfect songs in a lighter vein: 'Come again! sweet love doth now invite', with its delicate refrain—"To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die"—and the deservedly popular 'Awake, sweet love', a masterpiece of simple, direct writing, at which Dowland excelled. Both of these, slight as they are compared with such masterpieces as 'In darkness let me dwell', have the authentic Dowland touch. They have only to be compared with others of the same type by Jones or Campian for us to realize Dowland's genius. But it was a long way from 'Awake, sweet love' to the grandeur of the songs in 'A Pilgrime's Solace'.

To the 'Second Book' belongs the song which above all others made Dowland's name—'Lachrymae'. This beautiful, sombre ayre, with its broken, rising line—"And tears, and sighs, and groans"—is one of the most moving things in music. It is, by the way, interesting to compare with the above phrase the strikingly similar major passage in 'Come away', at the words "To see, to hear", &c. To this book also belongs the melancholy 'Sorrow, stay', with its insistent "Pity, pity, pity, pity, pity" and its heavy, syncopated rhythm of "But down, down, down, down, down, down I fall", a peculiarly expressive passage, musically.

Book III contains the fine setting 'Weep you no more, sad fountains', one of the loveliest poems Dowland ever set. But it is into the last book, 'A Pilgrime's Solace', that Dowland put his greatest work. His introspectiveness, his aloofness from popular taste, his by now fixed melancholy, are manifested here with greater clarity and power than in any of the earlier works. He deliberately turned his face from the musical developments of his time. The figured bass, then just coming into use, never appears, nor do the florid melodic lines then becoming popular with singers. This last book of songs is more contrapuntal than ever, as if in protest against the rising school of writers, whom he despised; and at the same time, as if to confound them on their own ground, it contains, in Warlock's words, "the widest range of purely harmonic combinations". So peculiarly individual is the music that one must feel, as one sings it, that only Dowland himself, whose "exquisiteness on the lute" so struck his contemporaries, could have done full justice to it. It is extraordinarily personal. He takes more liberties with time, with the use of pauses, than ever, till one receives the

impression almost of someone speaking his heart, slowly, sometimes hesitatingly and always with pain.

The first song is of no great interest. The second is short and fairly simple, a setting of the words 'Sweet, stay awhile' ascribed to Donne. But how different is this simplicity from the direct, straightforward settings of 'Shall I sue' and 'Awake, sweet love'. In truth, it is simple only in comparison with the other songs in the book. It is followed by several fairly short and less personal songs, till, through the impassioned, broken phrases of 'Go, nightly cares', through the smooth chromatic melancholy of 'From silent night' (chromaticism is a characteristic of Dowland, especially the later Dowland), we reach the extraordinarily powerful group which includes 'In this trembling shadow cast', 'If that a sinner's sighs', 'Thou mighty God' and 'Where sin sore wounding'. The book concludes with four less interesting songs, beautiful but rather overshadowed by this great quartet: 'My heart and tongue were twins', 'Up, merry mates', 'Welcome, black night' and 'Cease these false sports'.

Before going back to consider in detail the group mentioned above, reference must be made to the three songs included by Robert Dowland in his 'Musically Banquet'. Of these the most remarkable is 'In darkness let me dwell', one of the finest songs Dowland ever wrote. The ending of this song is superb. After the impassioned cry:

O let me living die,  
O let me living, let me living, living, die.  
Till death, till death do come,

follows a concluding phrase that is surely one of the most moving in all music. This song contains some of Dowland's most daring harmony, and there are many phrases which must have sounded strangely to Elizabethan ears.

The group of four which remain to be considered represent to my mind the peak of Dowland's achievement. They remind me, in conception, of Brahms's 'Four Serious Songs', those noble settings of religious words, written at the very end of the composer's life. These of Dowland's have religious words, though they can be by no means considered among the religious music of the age. They are too personal. The most interesting is 'Thou mighty God', and the words may be quoted to show the character of the whole group:

Thou mighty God, that rightest every wrong,  
Listen to Patience in a dying song.  
When Job had lost his children, land and goods,  
Patience assuaged his excessive pain,  
And when his sorrows came as fast as floods,  
Hope kept his heart till comfort came again.  
When David's life by Saul was often sought,  
And worlds of woes did compass him about,  
On dire revenge he never had a thought,  
But in his griefs Hope still did help him out.  
When the poor cripple by the pool did lie  
Full many years in misery and pain,  
No sooner he on Christ had set his eye,  
But he was whole, and comfort came again.  
No David, Job, nor cripple in more grief;  
Christ, give me Patience and my hope's relief.

This magnificent work opens without any preliminary passage for the lute, with the invocation "Thou mighty God", the first phrase ending on the word "wrong", with a chord, which, before it resolves, is expressively discordant. At the line "When Job had lost his children"



the key changes for several bars from G minor to A minor, producing a most poignant effect. Again, in the third section, after a mournful minor opening, the key changes to a triumphant major at the words "No sooner he on Christ had set his eye". It is impossible to do justice in an essay to the wealth of beauty in this song. It is useless to pursue it, bar by bar, in words: it must be heard, played, sung, studied. Every new reading of it produces a new and hidden harmony of supreme beauty and mastery. These four songs could never be rendered effectively in a concert-hall, even a small one. They must be studied by the individual; only thus can their full beauties be realized and their subtleties (and Dowland was one of the most subtle of composers) appreciated.

In conclusion, a brief reference must be made to Dowland's instrumental music, the bulk of which is contained in 'Lachrymae, or Seven Tears figured in Seven Passionate Pavans, with divers other Pavans, Galliards and Almands'. It is of little use in an article of this kind to enlarge upon this side of Dowland's work, which obviously needs musical illustration to be understood. There is also a certain amount of music for the lute alone, which has been edited by Peter Warlock and is accessible to the most amateurish pianist, for it presents few technical difficulties. Two of the most interesting pieces are those entitled, characteristically enough, 'Forlorne Hope' and 'Farewell', two chromatic fancies, of which Warlock writes in the preface that they are "not only compositions of strange and poignant beauty, but also documents of the first importance to the student of musical history, showing that England was fully abreast, if not ahead, of other nations in the development of harmonic resources and in the use of them for an emotionally expressive purpose".

No better illustration of Dowland's melancholic outlook could be found than his own words in the dedication to his collection 'Lachrymae': "And though the title doth promise tears, unfit guests in these joyful times, yet no doubt pleasant are the tears which music weeps, neither are tears shed always in sorrow, but sometime in joy and gladness". The title of the eighth piece in this collection is a fitting commentary on Dowland's whole life: "Semper Dowland semper dolens".

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

*The Harrow Replicas.* (Heffer, Cambridge, 1942.)

1. *The Autograph of Three Masters (Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms).* 10s. 6d.
2. *Purcell and Handel in Bickham's 'Musical Entertainer'.* 30s.
3. *Parthenia.* 35s.
4. *Johann Sebastian Bach: Prelude and Fugue in B minor.* 15s.

That these four handsome volumes can be produced by a British firm towards the end of the fourth year of war is matter for warm congratulation. They are a delight to the eye and to the mind. Technically they do not maintain the generally high standard of reproduction quite consistently: some pages of 'Parthenia', for instance, are less satisfactory than the best; but the best is first-rate. The volumes vary also in interest. I must own to only a rather tepid enthusiasm for the second volume, the selections from Bickham's 'Musical Entertainer', but that is only because I am more interested in music than in book production. 'The Musical Entertainer', printed in London and issued in successive parts during 1736-40, is a rare and beautiful book—"perhaps the most beautifully ornamented music book ever published", says Professor Otto Erich Deutsch, who contributes a historical and bibliographical note to each volume; the vignettes which decorate each of the two hundred songs have great charm (they were nearly all engraved by George Bickham, junior, who was also the publisher); indeed, this album of reduced facsimiles from it—the title-page to the first volume, fourteen songs by (or in some way connected with) Purcell and Handel, and one of the preliminary pages written by the calligrapher Willington Clark—is a very pleasant thing to possess, though it cannot compare in musical, antiquarian or human value with 'Parthenia' or the Bach Prelude

and Fugue or the extraordinary double sheet of folio music-paper which began its historical existence as a Beethoven manuscript, the back of which was used by Schubert first to sketch out a sonata movement and then to give a rudiments lesson, and which was later owned by Brahms who added his signature before he presented it to the Archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in 1893.

Granted that the Beethoven manuscript—of the early but charming song, 'Ich liebe dich'—is not of absorbing interest, except in so far as any Beethoven manuscript must fascinate us. (And even this not very significant document shows Beethoven taking pains and second thought to place the concluding scale-passage at the right octave.) But the Schubert sketch has both a musical and a human story to tell. What light it throws on Schubert's character and on the circumstances of his life! Not new light, it is true, but striking confirmation of what we already knew, confirmation in a form that strikes one with the force of a personal experience. How the Beethoven manuscript came into the possession of the twenty-year-old Schubert we do not know, but surely it was a treasured possession; yet so careless was the owner that one day in June 1817 he could pick it up and start writing out a sonata movement of his own on the back. Worse: having broken off his own composition at the top of the second blank page, he could use the rest for a child's exercise on the names of the notes. And our anger, that a man who could write such music should have had to waste his time in teaching children the simplest rudiments of music, is confounded with our comprehension that a man who could take such little care of a Beethoven manuscript would take little care of his own. It would have been the easiest thing for him to mislay the rest of the B minor symphony; he lived on a plane where genius was commonplace and its productions of no special value. The composition of his own, which he thus treated with so little respect, is the slow movement of what is now the piano sonata in E $\flat$  major, Op. 122. The original key of the Sonata was D $\flat$  and the slow movement which we now have in G minor is here sketched in D minor; the heading *Andante* has been crossed out and *Andantino* substituted, but in the definitive version Schubert decided on *Andante molto*. Though apparently a sketch, not a fair copy, the manuscript is as clean and fluent as most composers' fair copies, and the movement lies before us, breaking off at the precise moment of recapitulation, almost exactly as we have it to-day. Apart from the insertion of what are now bars 19-25 and the alteration of the even semiquavers of one of the second-subject themes to a dotted rhythm, Schubert made only trifling changes when he transposed the piece into G minor.

The Bach autograph has a less fascinating history. This manuscript appeared first just ninety-nine years ago and passed tamely through the hands of the then proprietor of the Peters Edition, Sir Herbert Oakeley and his family, and the Wilhelm Heyer Museum of Musical History at Cologne, into those of Mrs. Gisella Selden-Goth of New York, who is the present owner. It is a beautifully clean fair copy, and there is little to say of it except that we have here in Bach's own handwriting the only existing manuscript of one of his finest compositions, the B minor organ Prelude and Fugue which, says Dr. Harvey Grace, "one likes to think, with Parry, may have been Bach's last work of that type". One curious circumstance is that the whole work, prelude and fugue, is described by the composer himself on both a separate title-page and at the head of the first page of the music as simply a "Praeludium pro Organo".

There remains 'Parthenia'. The Maydenheat of the first musick that euer was printed for the Virginals is, as Professor Deutsch points out, "not only a very early specimen of printed music and certainly the first book so produced for the virginals, but probably the first music-book engraved in England; furthermore, it is very beautiful and exceedingly rare". So rare, indeed, that "of the first issue, published at the end of 1612 or the beginning of 1613, only the copy formerly in the collection of E. F. Rimbault and now in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, is known to exist". 'Parthenia' was first reprinted in modern notation by Rimbault in 1847, but his edition, though issued under the auspices of the Musical Antiquarian Society, has a garbled text and omits the important ornaments. Louise Farrenc, whom Professor Deutsch has forgotten in his note, included a better text of 'Parthenia' in her 'Trésor des Pianistes' (Paris, 1863). And there is Margaret Glyn's useful edition (William Reeves, 1908). But this facsimile, reproduced from the first edition, is of course in a different category: there is something peculiarly satisfying in an edition like this of beautiful old music in its beautiful original form.

G. A.

*Opera Nights*. By Ernest Newman. pp. 628, pl. 24. (Putnam, London, 1943.) 35s.

This is not Ernest Newman's most important literary achievement, and one may say without offence that it wears a little the air of a publisher's commission. But then, other works by Mr. Newman have been so very important, and musicians are the last among the devotees to art who ought to complain about commissioned works, for they are indebted to purchasers for many a great masterpiece. 'Opera Nights', quite simply, is a very readable, entertaining and instructive book. One need not ask for more in the case of such a work, even from Mr. Newman, though one may rejoice that he has in fact given very much more in the past, and is likely to do so yet in the future, since we are still awaiting the completion of his vast life of Wagner.

Some astonishment has been expressed elsewhere that the present book does not deal with a single one of Wagner's works, and indeed omits the most obvious repertory operas by Mozart, Verdi, Puccini and so on. The explanation is quite simple, however. Mr. Newman has not turned against Wagner, nor does he consider, one imagines, that Wagner's works could find a place only in a book entitled 'Music-Drama Nights', for that would apply equally to Strauss's 'Elektra', which is included here. Nothing either so startling or so pedantic as that! The plain fact is that he has published a similar volume before, in America, and that it took off the operatic cream, leaving him with what the average opera-goer would regard as the skim. Only the average opera-goer, though, for many works appear in this second volume which no discerning music-lover would care to ignore. Among the twenty-nine operas dealt with are, for instance, 'Turandot', 'Eugene Onegin', 'Prince Igor', 'Orfeo', 'Don Pasquale', 'Manon', 'Pelléas et Mélisande', 'The Bartered Bride' and 'Boris Godunov' (an oddly assorted list, but that is the order in which they appear). There are also some enticing curiosities, such as Cornelius's 'Barber of Bagdad', Berlioz's 'Les Troyens', Halévy's 'La Juive', Berg's 'Wozzeck' and Ravel's 'L'Heure espagnole'.

What strikes the reader as the most remarkable fact about the book, in a general way, is that Mr. Newman the eminent critic remains, as it were, in abeyance, and that the stage is taken by Mr. Newman the admirable writer. His masterly brief analyses of the operas are not, of course, uncritical; but it may fairly be said that, so far as that is humanly possible, they are non-critical. We are not to be given views about merits and defects, but facts. Still, they are not merely cold technical facts, but rather æsthetic ones, so that although we are not deliberately told whether Mr. Newman has a greater affection for 'The Seraglio' than for 'Thaïs', we may just guess that his deliberate detachment causes him some discomfort and allow ourselves at least a suspicion of where his inclination would lead him. Occasionally, of course, the warmth of his interest betrays him. There is no overlooking his delight in Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Golden Cockerel' or his appreciation of the finer points of Massenet's 'Manon'; and on the other hand he slips in some cruel truths about Meyerbeer in a fascinating exposition—or rather exposing—of 'Les Huguenots', which at the same time is never in the least unfair. Needless to say the book is none the worse for such lapses from strictly professional detachment; on the contrary, they give an agreeable spice to Mr. Newman's beautifully flowing and smooth writing. Nor is one's pleasure diminished by the occasional disagreements provoked by the critical remarks which Mr. Newman lets slip now and again, though one may be a little surprised at his disclosing "an affection for 'Louise' which nothing can overcome" (what, not even the crudity of its material and the ear-offending stridency of its orchestration?) and a little pained at his finding, on the other hand, only "the broadest of musical farce" in the "Come scoglio" aria in 'Così fan tutte'. Can Mr. Newman be right in thinking that Mozart was merely guying the Ferrarese's freakish voice, which indeed would have been tactless, if not tasteless? Is not the monstrously exaggerated musical style of this piece the infallibly right musical counterpart of da Ponte's parody of the Metastasian type of "parable aria"? Singers who have not Ferrarese's compass have been known to prove this by turning the tenths into thirds and singing the low B and A an octave higher, with the disastrous effect of turning wit into commonplace.

There is plenty of wit in Mr. Newman himself, as well as any amount of humour, the well-known and quite peculiar dry quality of which comes out delightfully over and over again in these pages and makes them endlessly enticing, though most readers will probably content themselves with going through the masterly introductory pages on each opera and its historical and literary connections, leaving the more detailed musical analyses for later reference on special occasions. If so, however, they will come across only the first of the specimens of Mr. Newman's good fun quoted here, and miss the second:

The plot [of 'Lakmé'] has no definite connection with any work of Loti's in particular, but flowered out of a certain type of novel which he popularized, in which a European hero—Loti for preference—is loved too well by a beautiful maiden of one of the inferior races. . . . The maiden, as a rule, did the correct thing and died of a broken heart after the inevitable parting. The young naval lieutenant also sailed away with his heart broken, but not so badly broken as to prevent him from letting the public into the secret of his romance in a novel that could count on reaching at least its fifty-third French edition in the first year or so.

Nevers [in 'Les Huguenots'] gives them a toast, "Our mistresses!", inviting Raoul to join in. For his own part, Nevers explains, he is on the point of bidding farewell to love, for he is now committed to matrimony. . . .

If such tit-bits are fished out to whet the reader's appetite, it should also be pointed out that he will find far more substantial fare in plenty. The book abounds in shrewd observations. Here is a sample:

. . . Don José, not Carmen, is the true psychological and dramatic centre of Mérimée's story, and Des Grieux, not Manon Lescaut, that of Prévost's. It is a



quaint paradox that each of the works containing these master-studies of male mentality should be known by the name of a female character who in neither of the three instances is anything more than the medium through which a light is thrown for us on the more complex and more tragic male. . . . And if the stage happens to have provided us with so many better Carmens, Manons and Thaisés than Joséés, Des Grieux and Athanaëls, that is partly because the women are all broadly typical, while each of the men concerned is an individual; and it is far easier for the average actor or actress to reproduce a type than to create an individual.

As for Mr. Newman's criticism, one may often cordially agree with it, as when he says of the great dumb-show 'Royal Hunt and Thunderstorm' in 'Les Troyens' that "it is the finest and most sustained piece of nature painting in all music; it is like some noble landscape of Claude come to life in sound". And even where one as heartily disagrees, as many people will do on finding that Mr. Newman thinks 'Così fan tutte' Mozart a good deal below his best, one is bound to pay serious attention to him. Nobody objects to Shakespearean criticism of that sort, and Mozart, who is the Shakespeare of opera, can well stand it.

The illustrations do much to enhance the interest of the book. Lawrence Tibbett's make-up and dental perfection are lamentably inadequate for Falstaff, Marjorie Lawrence as Thais (after conversion) looks ready not so much for the opera-house as for the operating-theatre, Lily Pons taking up half an inch in a singularly unattractive setting of the second act of 'The Golden Cockerel' might be anybody, and but for the lyre Kerstin Thorborg as Orpheus might be Kerstin Thorborg at any tea-party; but most of the other famous people look well in their disguise, and often the better for it.

E. B.

*A New History of Music: The Middle Ages to Mozart.* By Henry Prunières. Translated from the French and edited by Edward Lockspeiser. pp. 413. (Dent, London, 1943.) 21s.

In his translator's preface Mr. Lockspeiser is not quite fair to his author when he stresses the fact that M. Prunières is a Frenchman with a French outlook. In itself, surely, a French nationalistic outlook is no better than a German or any other: a historian who, however lightly, coquets with chauvinism puts himself out of court. Moreover, both Mr. Lockspeiser and the late Romain Rolland (whose Introduction corroborates with his accustomed flamboyancy) are inclined to depict M. Prunières as a sort of Christopher Columbus, the first to adventure on the perilous and magical seas of medieval music. But, as a matter of fact, M. Prunières is a quite adequate internationalist; nor does he make undue claims either for the pre-sixteenth century composers or for himself. Some of his enthusiasms may not, indeed, communicate themselves to every musician: we may possibly feel at times that he is an advocate pleading a special cause; but he pleads very temperately and persuasively, besides giving us (in examples in music type) abundant evidence on which to form our own opinions.

Mr. Lockspeiser tells us that this is the second and revised edition of a history planned ten years ago, with an additional section on Mozart (the authorship of which is not clear). It is divided into two parts of approximately equal length, dealing with music before 1600, and from 1600 to 1800; somewhat awkwardly, however, English music from Fayrfax to Handel is all crowded into twenty pages in the second part. In Part I the longest chapters are concerned with the invention of polyphony (with Pérotin and Machault as central figures), fifteenth-century polyphony from Dunstable to Josquin, and Italian and French "renaissances" (Lassus is reckoned as virtually a Frenchman): in a short chapter on Spain the great importance of Victoria is emphasized. In Part II stress is chiefly laid on Italian opera (native in the seventeenth century, international in the eighteenth), the Lully-Rameau period, and music in Germanic countries, with Bach as the head. It all makes very solid reading: innumerable facts of varying interest and importance are packed tight, and purely aesthetic criticism is, as a rule, comparatively slender. Anyhow, M. Prunières is very obviously a master of intimate and far-flung research.

There is a laudable profusion of musical examples. But misprints are not uncommon; and there is a curious lack of standardization. Short and open score vary on no fixed principles: most of the examples make use of treble and bass clef only, but one five-part Lully quotation (p. 273) gives the two violas in the alto clef, one of Ingegneri (p. 134) adds the mezzo-soprano and the F clef on the third line, and three times (pp. 65, 93, 101) double sets of clefs are provided. And in the text some miscellaneous things strike a reader's eye. Perhaps in a future edition the somewhat perfunctory treatment of Weelkes, Tartini and Haydn might be reconsidered: the account of Haydn is open, indeed, to serious objections. Handel did not (p. 326) "erect his pyramid of choruses in 'Israel in Egypt' on a graceful little aria from a serenata by Stradella"; the B minor Mass does not (p. 346) "end with a triumphant Agnus", and "meditative prayer" seems an inapt description of Bach's clavier works as a whole (p. 358), however well suited to at any rate some of the organ preludes. For "thorough-bass" in the account of the passacaglia in the fourth act of Purcell's 'King Arthur' (p. 321) we should read "ground-bass".

I rub my eyes when I read (p. 311) "Ernest Walker rightly considers Gibbons the father of English music". But, on turning up my 'History of Music in England', I find the words "virtually the father of pure Anglican music". I do not know what M. Prunières's original may be<sup>1</sup>; but I am sorry that he or Mr. Lockspeiser, or both, should make me talk nonsense.

E. W.

*Philosophy in a New Key: a Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art.* By Susanne K. Langer. pp. 313. (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.; Milford, London, 1942.) 20s.

This is a very original and important essay in philosophy. It cannot be read with one's feet on the mantel-shelf, but it is free from the gratuitous difficulties affected by some philosophical writers, who believe they are being profound when they are only being obscure. Mrs. Langer is intelligent, in the best sense of that ill-used word. She has a keen eye for the failures in some celebrated statements about the universe and a sense of ease in language that falls at times into pleasant colloquialism. But one wishes that so good a writer would respect certain conventions, well-established and worth preserving. "If we do so-and-so", she says, "we will be accused of trying to be cryptic". Why the unnatural "we will" instead of the natural "we shall"? "We will be accused" means "We are resolved to be accused", and that is certainly not her intention. The shades of meaning between "shall" and "will" are far too valuable to be disregarded, especially by philosophers, who should leave "we will" to Max Adler and his kind.

Mrs. Langer begins with a chapter recounting the rise and fall of philosophical theories from Thales to Freud, and its purpose is to call attention to the "new key", which is the "symbol". The complete exploiter of the symbol is the mathematician, who is not concerned with "things", but occupies himself with symbolical relations, which are certainly true, but which are certainly not scientific data, though men of science now find themselves using mathematics in order to arrive at their data. The problem of observation, says Mrs. Langer, is all but eclipsed by the science of meaning. The triumph of empiricism in science is jeopardized by the surprising truth that *our sense-data are primarily symbols*. Well, Berkeley, whom Mrs. Langer never once mentions, arrived at that conclusion early in the eighteenth century, when he was still a young man; but he never followed up his speculations or sought to erect them into a system. It is interesting to note, however, that his first published tracts were mathematical.

'Music & Letters', hospitable as it is to thought, can hardly entertain a philosophical discussion of semantic and symbolical interpretation, and explain the meaning of meaning. Fortunately, two of the present chapters happen to deal with music, and they can be strongly recommended to those inclined to consider theories of the art. Mrs. Langer quotes from many who have attempted an æsthetic of music; and what one reader wants to know is what some of these worthy philosophers *knew* about music. When they discussed music, what, precisely, were they discussing? Music is not an abstraction. It is an accumulation of concrete facts which, for the modern student or listener (I except the historian), may range from a Palestrina Mass to the latest piece of Hot Rhythm. Is it possible to extract from these facts, together with some to be mentioned later, an abstraction called "music" about which judgments can be made? And can a philosopher who spends his working life among abstractions be sufficiently familiar with the facts of music to be able to deliver trustworthy judgments about the art? Tovey, for example, was not a philosopher who included music in his survey of the universe; he was a working musician with the mind of a philosopher. The difference is vital.

We must pause for a moment to notice one remark that Mrs. Langer allows herself to make: "In past ages the uneducated masses had no access to great works of art". That is a most questionable statement. How far back are these "past ages"? Was Giotto's tower at Florence built only for the rich to look at? Were Victoria's responses at Tenebrae intended to be heard only by select amateurs? Was bushman art produced for a bushman aristocracy? Were Pueblo designs meant to appeal only to Pueblo highbrows? No indeed! What is remarkable about "past ages" is the natural production and consumption of what we call works of art; what is most lamentable in recent times is the barefaced attempt to fence off art from life and to reserve it as an area for a highbrow minority, the lower brows being treated as poachers if they attempt to enter it. So the highbrows, having no notion of "joy in widest commonality spread", produce their artistic celebrations (and their eulogies) for each other. Those of us who have lived long enough have seen many musicians, first claimed by the minority, pass either to the populace or to extinction. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner, once highbrow, are now popular. Richard Strauss, once highbrow, is now almost extinct. Debussy and Ravel already begin to sound tiresome. Vaughan Williams has recently been repudiated by one young critic as old-fashioned. The only admirations now permitted are those for Walton, Britten and Tippett, and, of course, for the German mathematicians.

My question now takes added point: when philosophers discuss music, do they consider this vast variation in reception, this unceasing change in standards of value? Do

<sup>1</sup> The sentence in question in the original French edition (vol. II, p. 214) is: "Le Dr. Ernest Walker saute justement en Gibbons le père de la musique anglaise."—En.

they mean by music an ordered series of symbols on scored paper, or do they mean music as something created by the aural apparatus of the listener? If they mean the latter, whose evidence do they accept? For, observe this, that when a piece of music is played, no two listeners hear it alike. There can be a science of music, for its material is sound, which is capable of exact scientific analysis. But how can there be an aesthetic of music, when the facts are in a state of perpetual flux, or even beyond our understanding, as Eastern music is to most of us? But the philosophers still rush in, although the Freudian analysis, for example, as Mrs. Langer admits, never offers the rudest criterion of artistic excellence: it merely seeks to discover the impulse that causes an artist to create. Can it discover something equally recondite, the impulse to receive?—for there is creativeness in reception: "You are the music while the music lasts".

Mrs. Langer thinks that our true philosophical concern is with significance alone. That does not carry us very far. There have been some philosophers for whom music has had almost no significance at all—they have regarded it merely as a particular kind of noise. Some have made its significance reside in pleasurable sensation and in the emotions it stimulates. Such views leave the area of discussion ill-defined—a cat purrs with pleasurable sensation when caressed, or screams (with quite modern tonality) when its emotions are stimulated. The tom-tom can be so cleverly manipulated that its sound will arouse a savage audience from passivity to frenzy. Though we exclude the multi-tonal cat, must we admit the tom-tom? It certainly stimulates the savage emotions more violently than a Bach cantata could ever do. "Expression" is another blessed word—the composer is moved by experience to expression and so transfers his experience to the hearer. Henry Prunières is very emphatic about experience and emotions, and declares that a composer will not "express these sentiments with authority unless he has experienced them at some given moment of his existence". Well, let us take a familiar example. One of the most marvellous songs ever written is Schubert's 'Gretchen am Spinnrade'. Gretchen, alone, despairing, about to become a mother, and abandoned by the lover who had seemed so wonderful, sits at her spinning-wheel and sings of her sorrows. The melancholy of the simple vocal line is intensified by a monotonous piano-forte figure symbolizing the whir of the wheel; but as she slowly recalls the past, the remembrance of the love that had irradiated her life, and especially her lover's kiss, moves her to a moment of ecstasy in which work and sorrow are both forgotten; she is rapt in pure joy, and the whirring of the wheel ceases; but the glory of remembrance fades; the dreadful truth comes back like a creeping shadow, and, with a few uncertain movements the wheel resumes its monotonous whir. How wonderful, we exclaim, what Shakespearean insight into the depths of a woman's soul! And then we remember that the composer whose "experience" enabled him to "express these sentiments with authority" was a youth of seventeen. The truth is that "experience" is one of those ensnaring words that easily mislead us. There is a vital difference between the creative experience of an artist and the personal experience of a man. Schubert wrote his song moved by an experience that came by divination, by inspiration, by some impulse arising from the hidden depths of his being, unknown to consciousness, unfathomable by reason. Let us beware of confusing artistic experience with personal experience. One notorious result of this confusion is the attempt to make Shakespeare's artistic experience, recorded in the plays, poems and sonnets, into a story of his personal life and sufferings. There is not a particle of evidence to support such a correlation.

The exponents of the "pleasurable-sensation" theory generally tend to associate music with something that is not music—with pictures, scenes, poems and stories; and the same is true of those who hold the view that "art" is one, the separate arts being particular manifestations of it. We need not go into the general question of "programme music"; but we can be sure of this, that any attempt to justify music which is bad as music, on the ground of its alleged literary or representational value, must be resisted as artistic falsehood. Pater's celebrated statement that all the arts aspire to the condition of music is perfectly sound criticism, that is, it is a conclusion reached after the examination of several different works of art; it is not, and was never meant to be, a fundamental concept of aesthetic philosophy, although the Renaissance (inspired by Plato) toyed with the idea of a universal art. Another fact of which we can be sure is that a critic who is narrowed by the time-spirit, who thinks a work bad because it cannot be brought into the twentieth-century context, is judging music by standards other than musical, and therefore judging falsely.

One aesthetic phenomenon usually ignored by the philosophers is idiom. Thus we know that Beethoven could not have written the 'Figaro' overture and Mozart could not have written the 'Egmont' overture. We feel certain of the facts, but we should find it very hard to produce definite evidence. We know that Shelley could not have written 'Resolution and Independence' and that Wordsworth could not have written 'Epipsychidion'; but we can attempt some sort of explanation, because poetry is made of words, and words convey meanings and ideas, even in the purest lyric. Music is made of sounds, which have no meaning and cannot convey ideas. That being so, it is difficult to believe that music can ever be brought within the scope of philosophy. Music lies beyond the reach of reason and defies any kind of analysis. Mrs. Langer's "new key"



is useless, because there is no keyhole. There can be rational discussion of clearly defined aspects of music, and we shall listen to the philosophers with respect if they talk with knowledge, sympathy and understanding. Mrs. Langer does not solve the unsolvable, but she gives us fifty pages of highly intelligent talk about music, and a multitude of references to other talks, perhaps less intelligent, especially when they lapse into polysyllabic abstractions. The paradox of music is that though it is abstract, it is not an abstraction. When she says, "I believe the æsthetic emotion and the emotional content of a work of art are two very different things", she may be talking philosophy; she is certainly talking sense.

G. S.

*The Book of Modern Composers.* Edited by David Ewen. pp. xii, 560, xiv; pl. 29. (Knopf, New York, 1942.) \$5.00.

Whenever a new American book on music comes into one's hands these days, one cannot help wondering rather uneasily whether something has not gone awry with "lease-lend", so far as paper and binding materials are concerned. The uncomfortable truth is that, compared with what our own literature, including the publication in which the present review appears, is reduced to, the books coming from the U.S.A. seem to be positively wallowing in luxury. The paper of the present specimen, though it smells so vile that only very longsighted persons can read the contents without discomfort, dazzles the eyes with its unblemished beauty and comforts them with its restful creaminess, while the somewhat blotchily unattractive binding looks anything but cheap.

But let us come to what really matters in a book, though in some cases one would hardly think it—the contents. However much embittered the reviewer may be by literary war-time privations, his grievance, which is of an inverted kind that makes him impatient with too much rather than too little, does not extend to Mr. Ewen's work or to that of the many contributors he has so skilfully assembled. For a book of its kind—a compilation of different subjects and a gathering of all sorts of European and American authors—this collection of studies of twenty-nine modern composers has turned out surprisingly well. True, the Editor may sometimes have gone to the most obvious writer. The 'Personal Note' which in the case of most of the composers supplies some sort of character-sketch supplementary to the couple of biographical pages given in every instance is entrusted to the subjects' wives in the cases of Sibelius and Roy Harris, to a daughter in that of Ernest Bloch or to intimate friends in other instances, and it was almost a foregone conclusion that Eric Fenby should be asked to outline Delius's personality. As for the more extended critical studies of the composers' work, they were more often than not given to writers who had discussed their subjects before, either in books or in articles. It would thus have been possible to obtain fresher views, no doubt; but on the whole Mr. Ewen seems to have been wise in playing for safety, so far as it lay with him, for the all-round quality of the critical studies is high, and though there are lapses into dullness or mildness here and there, none of these essays is unprofitable. As for the sections entitled 'The Composer Speaks', which appear in most cases and reproduce the subject's own words on some topic or other that interested him as an artist, Mr. Ewen is not to be held responsible for the striking unevenness in the quality of thought and expression found here. These extracts are always revealing, whether what they say is to the composer's advantage or not.

As was to be expected, the criticism is as a rule favourable. Not always, though. Alfred Swan's essay on Stravinsky may not unfairly be called hostile, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco is, for a fellow-composer and a devoted pupil, surprisingly detached in his appraisal of Pizzetti's work; which must have become almost embarrassing to him when he saw Roland von Weber's wholly favourable estimate of himself. Mr. Swan, by the way, although long resident in America, is an Englishman by birth, and it is amusing to find that the only studies in the book which have some sort of a sting to them are by English contributors, e.g. Cecil Gray on Sibelius and Hubert Foss on Walton. It only needed Professor Dent on Busoni—but that was another obvious choice avoided by Mr. Ewen, if only because Busoni is not there at all.

That seems to be a serious omission, when an older master like Elgar is included as well as a wholly conventional figure like Rakhmaninov, whose presence in a selection of moderns does not appear justifiable from any point of view. Janáček, Honegger or Kodály or even Casella might have taken his place with advantage. Neither, surely, is the inclusion of Gershwin easily explicable. Does one scent some sort of personal predilection as distinct from artistic consideration here? It is not that Mr. Ewen was anxious to cram in as many U.S.A. composers as possible, for there are only three, and among that small group Roy Harris and Aaron Copland are perfectly in their place. It is, of course, a commonplace view that Gershwin represents a vital aspect of American life. He does; but all vital aspects are not necessarily important from an artistic point of view, and with all his cleverness and easy charm Gershwin was simply not an artist who counts. To stand for the things American wishful thinking wants him to stand for, the man to choose was clearly Marc Blitzstein, with whose æsthetic outlook one may disagree and whose permanence one may question, but of whose artistry there is no doubt whatever. Indeed, the book could have done with two or three more U.S.A. composers

(I do not say "American" because Villa-Lobos and Chávez are there to represent Brazil and Mexico) without Mr. Ewen's laying himself open to the charge of chauvinism.

Of the twenty-nine fine collotype portraits—there is one of each composer—all but three or four are first-rate pictures, among the exceptions being Falla, Szymanowski and Vaughan Williams. The appendix containing lists of works is adequate if not very copious, but that giving details of the contributors would seem to be considerably out of date in some cases. There is a good index to names, works and things, including new technical terms. The composers discussed are, in addition to those mentioned above, Strauss, Ravel, Prokofiev, Schoenberg, Milhaud, Bartók, Hindemith, Malipiero, Berg, Kfenek, Martinu and Shostakovitch.

A few points may be lifted out of the book here and there, if only because it is the kind of thing one likes dipping into:

p. 61. Karl Geiringer shares Strauss's illusion that 'Der Rosenkavalier' has something in common with Mozart. It has about as much as an ostrich with a bird of paradise: both have wings but make very different use of them.

p. 70. Janet Flanner, in a brightly journalese personal note on Stravinsky tells us that he wears "debonair clothes". What is that in English?

p. 74. Stravinsky speaks, as usual, of "lack of comprehension" in those who do not prostrate themselves in adoration before all he writes. But what makes him so sure that understanding must necessarily engender liking? He does not like Beethoven, but he understands him. Or not?

p. 305-8. Busoni, in the few incidental remarks he is vouchsafed in Paul Rosenfeld's essay on Hindemith, is represented as a German composer, and Reger is once again discussed as though he had been a progressive force instead of a merely deflective one.

p. 343ff. Paul A. Pisk, whose quite enlightening study of Berg is marred by a parade of the clichés of German criticism ("the last consequences", "highest unity", &c.), mentions "the late Richard Wagner". Has Wagner joined Queen Anne in the next world, then?—English for *particelle* (which is not French) is "short score".

p. 356ff. Hans Rosenwald's chapter on Kfenek might also have benefited from a translator's more ruthless de-Germanization. Here such phrases as "imaginative height results from contrapuntal logic" turn up, which, alas! are so dear to Germans and mean so little to anybody else; and one cannot just turn *Klang* into "clang" and leave it at that.

p. 379. Shostakovitch, in an interview, makes the sort of political speech that seems to be expected of him. But a critic in 'Pravda' said a rather unexpected thing about 'A Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk', if Nicolas Slonimsky quotes him correctly in his essay on the Russian composer: the reason why it "was successful abroad lay in the fact that the music and the plot catered to [sic] the low instincts of the international bourgeoisie". The plain fact is, of course, that the opera was successful particularly in Russia, which was precisely the reason why it had to be prohibited.

E. B.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### A. E. HOUSMAN AND MUSIC

To the Editor of 'Music & Letters'

Sir,

The interesting article on 'A. E. Housman and Music', appearing in the October number of your publication, contains much conjecture concerning A.E.H.'s early attitude towards music. Professor William White, in his wonderfully painstaking analysis of the music found in the poems, seeks for evidence of the part which music took in the interests of A.E.H.'s youth.

Considering the evidence that exists of A.E.H.'s marked indifference to music in after life, it is no wonder that Professor White wished to know whether it had been inherent from his earliest years. It had not. Writing as a sister, one of the few living persons who can know anything about my brother's boyhood, I should like to tell Professor White, and anyone else interested in the question, that in boyhood music attracted my brother in so marked a degree that it came as a surprise on survivors of his family to read, after his death, reminiscences from later-day friends which appeared to show in A.E.H. ignorance of music, or even antipathy. To us the incidents of these reminiscences suggest either a pose, concealing a hidden attachment, or that the early attachment had really died away. Either is possible through the suppressions that my brother practised—to his lasting loss.

In my own reminiscences of his boyhood I never mentioned music among his tastes, for it took no prominent part in his home or school life; but now that an unmusical life-history puzzles those who find music expressed in his poems, a statement of his inclination towards music in early life seems desirable.

I can only begin with our schoolroom days at Fockbury. Before that, I was in the nursery. An early memory is of Alfred buying good music and trying to learn to play it. It was not as simple to him as Greek and Latin, and when he found he had no easy aptitude for piano-playing he gave it up. No doubt this was a disappointment to him, but he never cared to do anything that he could not do well. He heard a good deal of home music, and never avoided it, though his school work stood in the way of his practising part-singing with the rest of us. Concert music he liked, and took the few opportunities he had of hearing it. Our stepmother was musical and a good pianist. She and our father belonged to the Bromsgrove Philharmonic Society, bringing oratorio and other music better than our glees into our drawing-room practisings. Of instrumental music, Alfred heard and enjoyed Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn at home. As I have said, he bought and tried to play pieces that pleased him most. He had a pleasant singing-voice—baritone—and it took his fancy to learn to accompany and sing, solo, an absurd comic song of the Bab Ballad type. He was in request to sing this song at little parties in other houses than ours, and I have heard that he sang it sometimes in London in the days of his sad pilgrimage. This was looked on as a great joke, for it was incongruous with his usual reserved bearing. At the age of sixteen he paid his first visit to London, and he told in a long letter about his doings, of going to a concert where, as there were no seats to be had, he lay on the floor to listen. In a subsequent letter, this is what he said, writing to his stepmother:

I am very much obliged for the 'Standard' you sent me, though I am sorry to say that I did not go to that concert, for though I arrived there in plenty of time, all the shilling places were full, and I did not happen to have two shillings with me. However I went to Baker St. & saw Mme Tussaud's, which I should not otherwise have had time to see, though of course I should have preferred the concert. It was however in a great measure a repetition of the one which I heard on the Saturday after I went to London; Santley, especially, sang exactly the same songs.

This all shows that though my brother had no training in music he had a liking for it. All that he heard at home belonged to the melodious music of Victorian days, when the discordant music that now pleases modern taste was unknown. If in any way he expressed in his poems the harmonious music familiar to him in his boyhood, I can understand his horror on hearing his verses interpreted by the type of music to which he listened on Dr. Withers' gramophone. As Professor White says: "His knowledge, as well as his taste, remained to his death attuned to the simplicity of the undeveloped lyric tune". My brother certainly had a great desire that his poems should find musical settings that would catch the popular ear and be remembered in a way that would contribute to their immortality. So far as I know, no such setting has yet been composed. Professor White quotes Mr. Newman's conclusion that there is no English composer who can pierce to the heart of the poems and capture their real mood.

Perhaps the relation of these facts will remedy omissions in my reminiscences published after my brother's death, and be acceptable to some of your readers.

Yours faithfully,

KATHARINE E. SYMONS.

Oak Lodge, Exmouth.

November 1943.

[For the sake of completeness the following should be added to Professor White's list of Housman songs:

Cripps, A. Redgrave, 'Five Shropshire Lad Songs'. London, Stainer & Bell Ltd. (XXIX, XIII, XV, XXII, LVII.)

— 'Nine Shropshire Lad Songs'. London, Augener Ltd. (V, XVI, XXVII, XL, LII, XXXV, LIV, XLIX, XXIII.)

Orr, C. W., 'Three Songs from A Shropshire Lad'. London, J. & W. Chester Ltd. (XL, LV, V.)

— 'The Lads in their Hundreds'. London, Stainer & Bell Ltd. ('A Shropshire Lad' XXIII.)

— 'Soldier from the Wars Returning'. London, Stainer & Bell Ltd. ('Last Poems' VIII.)—Ed.]

*To the Editor of 'Music & Letters'*

Sir,

Recently there came into my hands in the course of my work here a curious copy of an Arne libretto. The title-page reads:

Alfred/The/Great;/an/oratorio./ As perform'd at the/Theatre Royal/in/Drury-Lane./ The Music compos'd by Dr. Arne./ Price One shilling.

There is, as will be observed, no imprint, and the last page, unfortunately, is missing from the copy, so any colophon or other aid is lost with it.



The peculiarity lies in the description of 'Alfred' as an oratorio—which, of course, it is not; and on investigating the matter in the appropriate reference books and catalogues I find no other allusion to it as such, nor trace of this libretto with its erroneous title.

I should be glad to know if anyone else has, or can trace, another copy of this music "curio". From bibliographic and internal evidence (songs contained, &c.) the libretto seems to be the earlier version of the masque, so the date must lie between 1740 (first performance) and 1745 (second version).

Yours faithfully,

JEAN M. ALLAN,  
Music Librarian.

Edinburgh Public Libraries.  
October 19th 1949.

## MUSIC RECEIVED

(To be reviewed in the April issue, so far as space will allow)

- Barbirolli, John, *An Elizabethan Suite*, arranged from Keyboard Pieces by Byrd, Bull and Farnaby for Strings and Horns. (Oxford Orchestral Series, edited by W. G. Whittaker.) (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 4s.
- Britten, Benjamin, *A Ceremony of Carols*, for Treble Voices and Harp, Op. 28. (Winthrop Rogers; Boosey & Hawkes, London.) Vocal Score, 3s. 6d.
- , *Matinées musicales*. Second Suite of 5 Movements from Rossini, arranged for Orchestra. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) Full Score, 10s.
- , *Rejoice in the Lamb*. (Christopher Smart.) Festival Cantata for S.A.T.B. and Organ, Op. 30. (Winthrop Rogers; Boosey & Hawkes, London.) Vocal Score, 3s.
- Corelli, *La Follia* for Violin and Piano, arranged from the figured bass by Frank Merrick. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 4s.
- Gibbs, Armstrong, *Carol and Coranto*, from Suite, Op. 101, for Violin and Piano. (Winthrop Rogers; Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 2s. 6d. each.
- Handel, *Overture from the Opera 'Ottone'*, for Strings and Woodwind. Transcribed and edited by Reginald Jacques. (Oxford Orchestral Series, edited by W. G. Whittaker.) (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 4s.
- , *Sonata in F major*, arranged for Viola and Piano from the figured bass by Lionel Tertis. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 5s.
- Haydn, *Trumpet Concerto*. Edited and arranged by Ernest Hall; reduction for Piano by P. Sainton. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 6s.
- Matthews, Denis, *Serenade* for Cello and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 5s.
- Purcell, *Five Songs* for Soprano or Tenor solo, Chorus and Orchestra. Edited by Gerald M. Cooper. (Henry Purcell: Popular Edition of Selected Works, No. 3.) (Novello, London.) Vocal Score, 2s. 3d.
- Rawsthorne, Alan, *Two Songs: 'Away, Delights'; 'God Lyaeus'* (John Fletcher), for High Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 3s.
- Stanton, W. K., *By the Rivers of Babylon*, for unaccompanied six-part Chorus (Psalm 137). (Oxford Choral Songs edited by W. G. Whittaker.) (Oxford University Press.) 1s. 4d.

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